

INFANTRY PLATOON DEFENSE

Subcourse Number IN 0497

EDITION C

**UNITED STATES ARMY INFANTRY SCHOOL
FORT BENNING, GEORGIA 31905-5593**

5 Credit Hours

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SUBCOURSE OVERVIEW

This subcourse is designed to teach the basic information on infantry platoon defense. This subcourse contains infantry platoon tactical defense, identifying defense plans, operation orders and fighting positions for squad members, identifying how to coordinate with adjacent platoons and execution of a platoon defense.

There are no prerequisites for this subcourse.

This subcourse reflects the doctrine which was current at the time it was prepared. In your own work situation, always refer to the latest publications.

The words "he", "him", "his", and "men", when used in this publication, represent both the masculine and feminine genders unless otherwise stated.

TERMINAL LEARNING OBJECTIVE

ACTION: Identify and analyze the fundamentals of defense and other considerations, analyze terrain using the five military aspects of terrain in the defense, identify control measures for the defense, prepare and issue an oral platoon operation order for a defensive mission, identify plans for conduct of the defense by a forward rifle platoon, designate fighting positions for squad members (less crew served weapons) in the defense, coordinate with adjacent platoons, and execute a rifle platoon defense.

CONDITIONS : You will be given the subcourse material, and a combat (training) scenario. You will complete the examination at the end of this subcourse.

STANDARDS: You will demonstrate your comprehension and knowledge of Subcourse IN0497 by achieving a minimum of 70% on a multiple-choice base examination and identify and analyze the fundamentals of defense, analyze terrain using the five military aspects of terrain in the defense, identify control measures for the defense, prepare and issue an oral platoon operation order for a defensive mission, identify plans for conduct

of the defense by a forward rifle platoon, designate fighting positions for squad members (less crew served weapons) in the defense, coordinate with adjacent platoon, and execute a rifle platoon defense.

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LESSON ONE

INFANTRY PLATOON TACTICAL DEFENSE

Soldiers Manual Tasks:

- * NSMT Identify and analyze the fundamentals of defense and other considerations.
- 071-331-0820 Analyze terrain using the five military aspects of terrain in the defense.
- 071-410-0019 Control organic fires.
- *No Soldier's Manual Task.

OVERVIEW

Task Infantry Platoon Tactical Defense
Description:

TASKS: Identify and analyze the fundamentals of defense and other considerations, analyze terrain using the five military aspects of terrain in the defense, and control organic fires.

CONDITIONS: Given the subcourse material for this lesson, a training scenario, the student will complete the practice exercise at the end of this lesson.

STANDARDS: The student will demonstrate his comprehension and knowledge by identifying and analyzing the fundamentals of defense and other considerations, analyzing terrain using the five military aspects of terrain in the defense, and controlling organic fires.

REFERENCES: The material in this lesson was derived from the following publications:
FM 7-8
FM 7-10
FM 21-3

INTRODUCTION

The purpose of defense is to defeat the enemy's attack and gain the initiative. Defense is a temporary measure conducted to identify or create enemy weaknesses that allows for the early opportunity to change over to the offense. Initially outnumbered, the defender uses maneuver and firepower to first blunt the attack, then concentrate combat power to counterattack and direct friendly strength against enemy weakness. Defensive operations achieve one or more of the following:

- Destroy the enemy.
- Cause an enemy attack to fail.
- Deceive the enemy.
- Gain time.

- Concentrate forces elsewhere.
- Control key terrain.
- Wear down enemy forces before conducting offensive operations.
- Retain terrain.

As stated, the immediate purpose of any defense is to defeat the attack. Other purposes, while important, are not the primary focus of the defense.

Defense is used to gain time for reinforcements to arrive or to economize forces in one sector while concentrating forces for attack in another. In either case, a defense or a delay may achieve these purposes.

In other cases, portions of a force may be required to retain key or decisive terrain or essential strategic, operational, or tactical objectives. Even in offensive operations, air assault, airborne, or amphibious forces may need to defend deep objectives until a larger force can link up with them. Whatever its larger purpose, the immediate challenge of any defensive operation is to recapture the initiative and thus create the opportunity to shift to the offensive. All activities of the defense must contribute to that aim.

PART A - FUNDAMENTALS OF THE DEFENSE

1. General.

Infantry defends best in rugged or heavily wooded terrain or in urban areas which restrict vehicular movement. It relies on a well-positioned, well-prepared, relatively fixed defense. This is called a "position defense."

2. Position Defense.

Once in position, the infantry is relatively fixed and only minor movements are planned. This is the position defense. The intent of the position defense is to hold occupied terrain. The deployment of the rifle company varies according to the mission, enemy, terrain and weather, and troops and time available (METT-T), as well as the amount and type of combat support available.

A rifle company normally defends as part of a battalion to deny an area to the enemy, protect flanks, or disorganize and destroy the enemy. The company defends by stopping the enemy by fire forward of the company position or by repelling him if he reaches that position.

The battalion commander assigns the rifle company a sector or battle position (BP) which is part of the battalion sector or BP. To some degree, he controls the way the company deploys by prescribing the size of its sector/BP and the terrain it will defend. If he thinks the company needs more firepower to defend its sector/BP, the battalion commander may attach some combat support company elements to it. If the battalion has tanks assigned, the battalion commander may put a platoon of tanks under the operational control (OPCON) of the company. He may give the company priority of battalion mortar or artillery fire including final protective fire. An engineer squad or platoon may also be in support or under OPCON of the company to help it construct obstacles and positions.

Operational control is a relationship which places a unit under a commander for assignment of tasks, designation of objectives, composition of subordinate units, and authoritative direction to accomplish a mission. OPCON does not imply responsibility or authority for administration, combat service support, discipline, internal organization, or training. The commander's relationship with OPCON units is otherwise the same with organic or attached subordinate units.

The company commander considers METT-T when selecting platoon and weapon positions and deciding the allocation of combat power. He attains depth and an all-round defense by assigning platoons and weapons primary, alternate, and supplementary positions.

The company commander must know how to employ his company and also how the battalion defends. He must know the capabilities of the combat support units that may help his company defend.

Your platoon will normally defend as part of a company to deny an area to the enemy, protect flanks, or disorganize and destroy the enemy.

A platoon defends by stopping the enemy by fire forward of its position or by repelling him if he reaches that position.

3. Fundamentals of Defense.

At company level, the planning, preparation, and conduct of the defense are based on the fundamentals listed below.

- Understand the Enemy. The company commander must be thoroughly familiar with the capabilities and limitations of the enemy. He must know the organization of enemy units and how they are deployed in the attack. He must also be aware of the capabilities of enemy weapons and equipment and how they are used.
- See the Battlefield. Prior to the battle, the company commander must try to acquire, develop, and disseminate all possible information on the enemy's location, organization, and strength. He positions himself where he can observe the battlefield. Once the battle starts, he must have a continuous flow of information on enemy activities to augment his personal observations in order to make timely and accurate decisions. He must deny the enemy similar information with operations security efforts.
- Concentrate Combat Power at Critical Times and Places. The first means of concentrating combat power is through the use of artillery and mortar fire. These assets can be quickly shifted to critical points to delay, disrupt, or destroy an enemy attack and then be shifted again to concentrate against other threats. Concentrating fire of infantry weapons, because of their limited range, requires positioning sufficient units and weapons before the battle. Other direct fire weapons such as tube-launched, optically tracked, wire-guided (TOW) missiles and tanks can more easily concentrate their fire. TOWs, because of their accuracy at extended ranges, concentrate fire primarily through assignment of primary and secondary sectors of fire. Tanks, because of their mobility and protection, more often reposition to concentrate fire.

The second means of concentrating combat power is to reposition units to occupy alternate or supplementary positions in depth in the path of the enemy attack. Reserves may be positioned near

critical terrain or likely enemy avenues of attack. Blocking positions, alternate positions, or even strong points may be established to deny the enemy the chance for a rapid breakthrough. If armored units are available, they can be used to concentrate forces or counterattack at critical times and places.

Counterattacks by dismounted infantry against armored forces are very difficult. However, certain conditions provide dismounted infantry a distinct advantage over the enemy before being detected.

Infantry counterattacks against dismounted infantry can and should be conducted whenever necessary to maintain the integrity of the defense and to defeat the attacker.

- **Exploit the Advantages of the Defender.** When given time, the commander has a number of advantages which allow him to defeat an attacking force much larger than his own. He analyzes the terrain in detail and is intimately familiar with features that increase his chance of success. The attacker must feel his way over the terrain, seeing the area for the first time. The commander has his company prepare positions, construct obstacles, and conceal its efforts in advance. The attacker must guess where the defender is located. The commander initiates the fight from prepared, stationary positions which are difficult to detect and which provide cover from enemy fire. The attacker must react to the defender and either fire while moving or lose momentum by seeking covered positions. The commander develops flexible plans for control of fire, movement, communication, and logistics to fit any predictable situation.
- **Fight as a Combined Arms Team.** Field artillery, engineers, infantry, air defense artillery, tanks, tactical aircraft, and attack/assault helicopters can all contribute to mission success. The commander integrates available assets so that their combined effect on the enemy is far greater than their individual effects. Each asset, in given circumstances, can be the arm most critical to the defense. In very rugged terrain, infantry locates targets so that massive firepower can destroy them. With assault helicopters, infantry may be capable of moving to block enemy attacks over much larger areas. In more open terrain, artillery-delivered mines and engineer-prepared obstacles may be used to slow enemy armor. Tactical aircraft and antitank weapons then become the key systems. The commander must insure that each member arm is integrated so that the strengths of each are maximized and their vulnerabilities minimized.

In addition to the fundamentals of defense, the company commander must consider the following when planning his defense.

- **All-Round Defense.** Although a defense usually is prepared to repel an attack from one general direction, the company must be ready to defend against a ground attack from any direction. It does this to some extent by having supplementary positions, tying-in with adjacent units, posting observation posts (OPs), and conducting patrols. It is always prepared for an air attack. Air defense consists of both active measures; use of surface-to-air missile and small arms fire, and passive measures; concealment from air observation.
- **Defense in Depth.** The company attains depth by the positioning of its units and weapons. This is done to keep the attacker from easily flanking the defense or exploiting a penetration. When antiarmor weapons are positioned in depth, they are less likely to be suppressed simultaneously.
- **Mutual Support.** Units and weapons are positioned so that their sectors of fire overlap, and so that they can fire at enemy troops attacking adjacent weapons and units.

- **Security.** The defender takes all steps necessary to preclude surprise. As the attacker has the initiative to pick the time, place, and direction of the attack, the defender posts security for warning. Security measures include OPs, STANO (surveillance, target acquisition, and night observation) and ground sensor devices, mines, boobytraps, and patrols. The company may deploy security elements to its front, flanks, and rear. Security should be strong around the clock and in all weather conditions.
- **Maximize Effectiveness of Key Weapons.** The commander must organize his defense around weapons most effective against the attacker. When facing a major armor force, the allocation and positioning of antitank weapons (for example, TOW missiles, Dragon missiles, mines, and tanks) are the chief means of defense while other assets serve to supplement them and compensate for their vulnerabilities. Against an enemy infantry threat, infantry-defeating weapons (for example, machineguns, mortars, artillery, and small arms) and antipersonnel obstacles (such as wire and mines) are integrated to create a barrier to stop the enemy and destroy him forward of defensive positions. Antitank weapons strengthen this barrier. The effectiveness of all defense weapons is increased when they are concealed so as to escape enemy suppressive fire.
- **Use Obstacles to Strengthen Positions and Complement Fire.** Obstacles are positioned to stop or canalize the enemy. Natural obstacles can be reinforced by; manmade obstacles such as minefields, abatis, road craters, ditches, and tactical wire. Large obstacles are normally planned by higher commands, but the company may be required to help the engineers build them.
- **Use Antiarmor Weapons to Kill Armor.** In the defense, it is desirable to kill enemy armor well forward of the company's position. Though the company is relatively fixed, its TOWs are mobile. They may first fire at enemy tanks from positions forward of the company's position and then move to positions with long fields of fire well behind the forward rifle platoons. This adds depth to the defense and exploits the TOW's range advantage over tank guns. Dragons are positioned within the platoon positions to engage targets from short to medium ranges. Light antitank weapons (LAW) are used to engage targets at short ranges.
- **Maximum Use of Offensive Action.** The commander must be alert to gain the initiative by offensive action. Aggressive patrolling helps keep up the offensive momentum and helps the commander see the battlefield. Counterattacks are normally conducted by battalion or brigade, but the company may use its reserve to conduct a small scale counterattack. The company may also use its reserve to block a penetration, until the battalion's counterattack is launched.

4. Summary.

This concludes the discussion on fundamentals of the defense. During this portion of the subcourse we discussed how infantry platoons defend and the fundamentals of the defense at the company level. We will now move to the next phase which is analyzing the military aspects of terrain in the defense.

PART B - ANALYZE MILITARY ASPECTS OF TERRAIN IN THE DEFENSE

1. General.

On receipt of a company defense order, you, as the platoon leader, must start your troop leading procedure, and make an estimate of the situation. The estimate considers METT-T.

2. Analyzing Terrain.

To plan a defense, you must analyze the terrain on which you will defend to determine its effects on the actions of friendly and enemy forces. The aspects you must analyze are:

- Observation and fields of fire. You must decide where weapons will have the best fields of fire to cover the platoon sector. Observation is needed to gain information of the enemy, to adjust indirect fire, and to shoot direct fire accurately. Fields of fire are cleared at least out far enough to kill the enemy before he can assault or throw hand grenades into fighting positions. Fields of fire are improved by selectively clearing grass, brush, trees, and rubble. Fresh cuts are camouflaged so the enemy cannot see what has been done.

Before clearing a field of fire, you and your squad leaders should estimate how much clearing can be done in the time available. You can then decide what clearing is to be done.

Your soldiers should:

- not disclose the unit's position by careless or too much clearing;
- leave a thin natural screen of vegetation to hide defensive positions;
- remove or thin dense brush which obstructs the field of fire;
- cut weeds only where they obstruct observation;
- drag away cut brush, limbs, and weeds to places where the material will not be seen by the enemy or hide him from the position;
- remove all cuttings;
- cover cuts on trees and bushes forward of the position with mud, dirt, or snow; and
- in clearing, leave no trails as clues for the enemy.

In thick woods, complete clearing of a field of fire may not be desirable or possible in the time available. Riflemen and machine-gunners just thin undergrowth and remove lower branches of trees. Grenadiers must clear fields of fire on the ground and overhead.

- Cover and Concealment. Cover is protection from the fire of enemy weapons. It may be natural or manmade. Each soldier must use terrain to gain cover and concealment, and he must supplement natural cover and concealment with camouflage ([Figure 1-1](#)).



Figure 1-1. Cover.

Natural cover includes logs, trees, stumps, ravines, hollows, reverse slopes, etc. Manmade cover includes fighting positions, trenches, walls, rubble, abandoned equipment, and craters. Even the smallest depression or fold in the ground gives some cover. Soldiers must look for and use every bit of cover the terrain offers.

When the enemy approaches a defending platoon's position and brings it under direct and indirect fire, there must be cover to protect the troops. Natural cover is best as it is most difficult for the enemy to spot.

To increase the protection afforded by natural cover against enemy direct and indirect fire, soldiers build fighting positions. The type and extent of preparation will depend on the mission and the length of stay.

You should have your soldiers prepare a simple prone shelter first; then, as time allows, prepare a more fully developed position, up to a completed fighting position with overhead cover and trenches connecting it with other positions.

A fighting position, well placed and well built, gives the defender a big advantage over an attacker ([Figure 1-2](#)). It must:

- Protect Against - small arms fire, indirect fire fragments, tanks and antitank guided missile (ATGM) fire, and aerial and ground observation; and
- Provide For - mutual support with other fighting positions, observation, and a good field of fire.

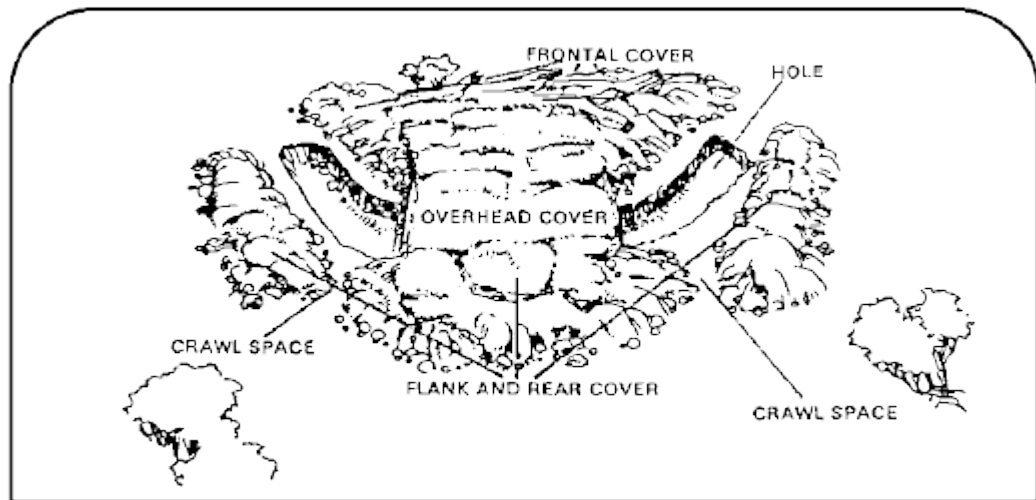


Figure 1-2. Fighting Position.

Protection from enemy weapons' effects reduces the chances of casualties.

As stated natural frontal cover (trees, rocks, logs, rubble, etc.) is best. Because, it is hard for the enemy to see a fighting position concealed by natural cover. Dirt from the hole may be used to improve protection. Bags of wet, packed sand also give good protection.

Frontal cover must be thick enough (at least 18 in/46 cm of dirt) to stop small arms fire, high enough to cover the heads of the men shooting from it, and far enough in front of the hole to allow room for elbow rests and sector stakes so that the men can fire to the oblique. It must be long enough to give cover to two men and to hide the muzzle blasts of their rifles when shooting to the oblique.

Positions should be made so that when they come under frontal fire, the troops can move behind the frontal cover and shoot to the oblique.

Complete protection comes from the addition of overhead, flank, and rear cover. This protects against indirect fire that bursts overhead or to the flanks or rear of the position and against the effects of friendly weapons supporting from the rear, for example small arm fire, or discarded sabots from tank gun rounds.

Crawl spaces are left in the rear cover to let soldiers enter and exit positions without exposing themselves.

The hole should not be too large. The smaller a position is, the less likely it is that enemy rounds, grenades, or airburst fragments will get into it. But, it should be large enough for two men in full combat gear. It should extend as far beyond the edges of the frontal protection as necessary to let the men fire to the front when not suppressed. The extension of the hole is usually straight, but may curve around the frontal protection if necessary.

No matter how much protection a position may have, the enemy may be able to defeat the defender if his position is easy to see. Positions must be so well hidden that the enemy will have a hard time seeing them even after he is in hand grenade range.

When moving, soldiers use a route which puts cover between the friendly unit and the places where the enemy is known or thought to be. They use ravines, gullies, hills, wooded areas, and other natural cover to keep the enemy from seeing and shooting at them. They avoid open fields. Units avoid skylining on hills and ridges. In a desert, rock formations and depressions are cover.

- Concealment. Concealment is anything that hides a soldier, unit, position, or equipment from enemy observation. Discipline in the control of camouflage, light, noise, and movement must be enforced. Well-hidden fighting positions help conceal a unit's location from the enemy ([Figure 1-3](#)).

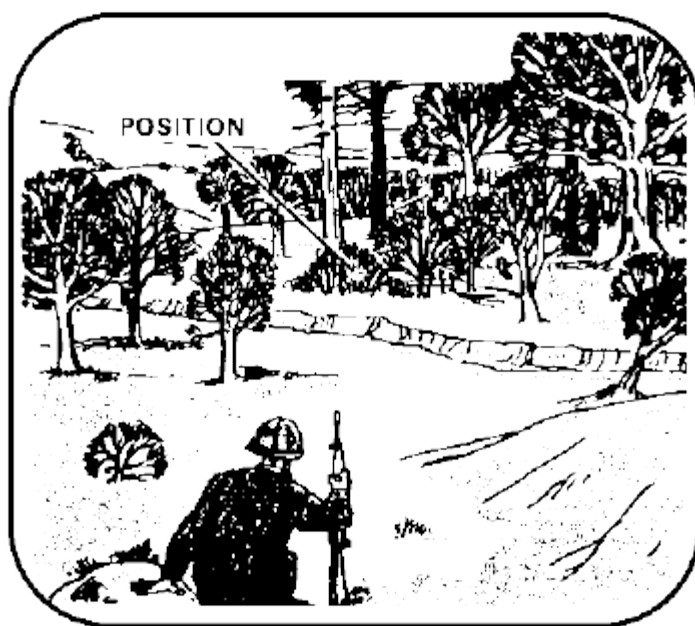


Figure 1-3. Concealment.

The best way to use natural concealment is to refrain from disturbing it when the unit moves into an area. Darkness alone does not hide a unit from an enemy who has night vision and other detection devices.

Camouflage involves using the environment and other natural and manmade material. Used well, it reduces the chance of detection by the enemy. If camouflage material is needed, it should be brought from outside the platoon's position. It can be branches, bushes, leaves, and grass. It can be attached to vehicles with old communications wire. Live foliage is best because dead foliage and manmade material may not blend with surroundings. Good camouflage will conceal places which at first seem open and exposed.

- Obstacles (natural and manmade) ([Figures 1-4](#) through [1-8](#)). These stop, delay, or divert movement. Obstacles that can stop tanks and BMPs may not stop enemy troops on foot. Defending troops must reinforce natural obstacles, such as deep creeks, steep ravines, and dense brush, with wire and mines. If wire and mines are deployed in thick woods with large trees, enemy armor and infantry can be slowed or stopped. Troops must cover obstacles with fire. Obstacles that stop or slow armor include:
 - Slopes over 60 percent.

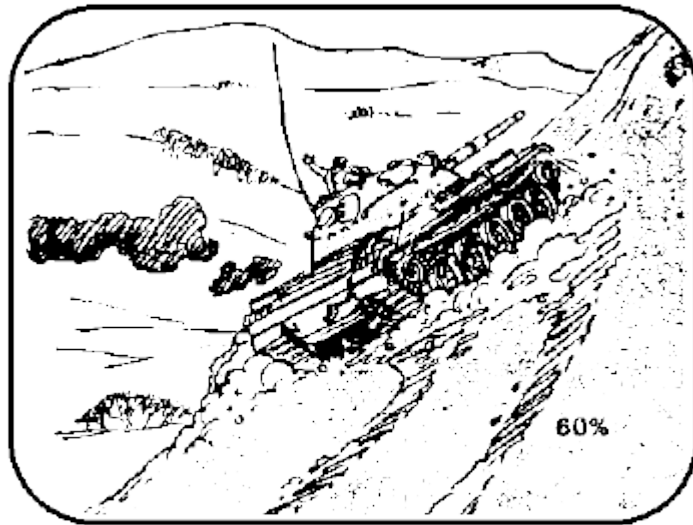


Figure 1-4. Slopes Over 60 Percent.

- Steep banks and walls over 1 1/2 meters high.

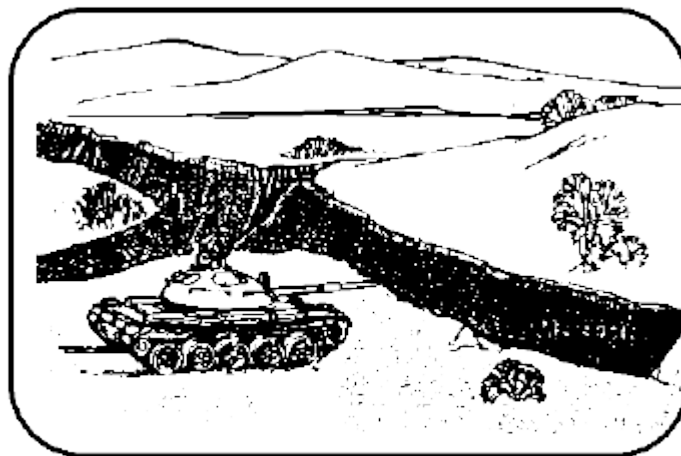


Figure 1-5. Steep Banks and Walls.

- Gullies, ravines, and ditches over 5 meters wide.

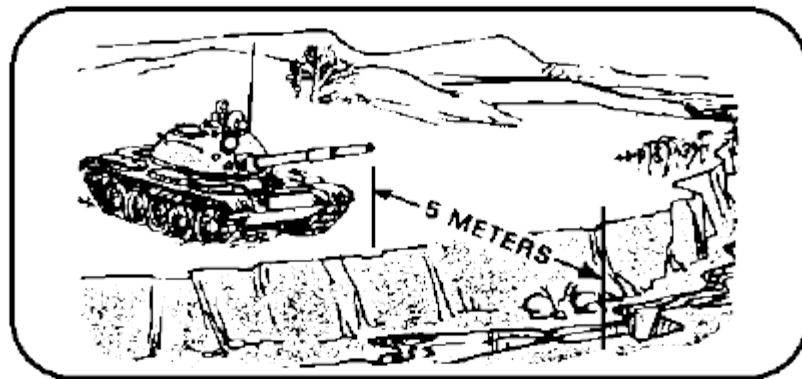


Figure 1-6. Gullies, Ravines, and Ditches.

- Trees 45 cm (18 in) thick or larger limit tank movement if the trees are close enough together to keep tanks from going between them. Smaller trees limit BMP movement. If they are close together or on a steep slope, they limit tank movement.

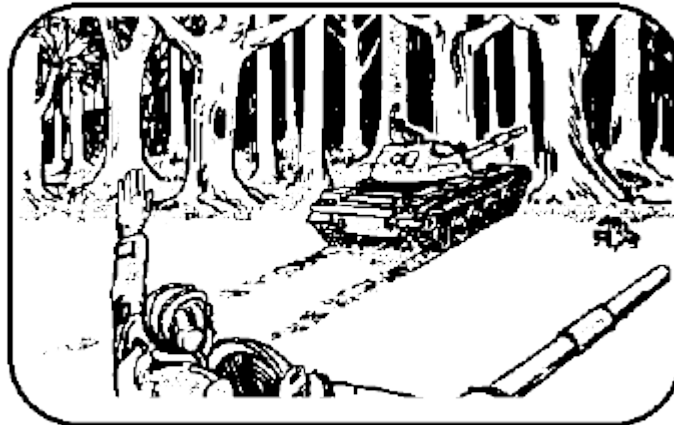


Figure 1-7. Trees.

- Streams, canals, and marshes stop vehicles and force the attacker to bypass or to build a means to cross.

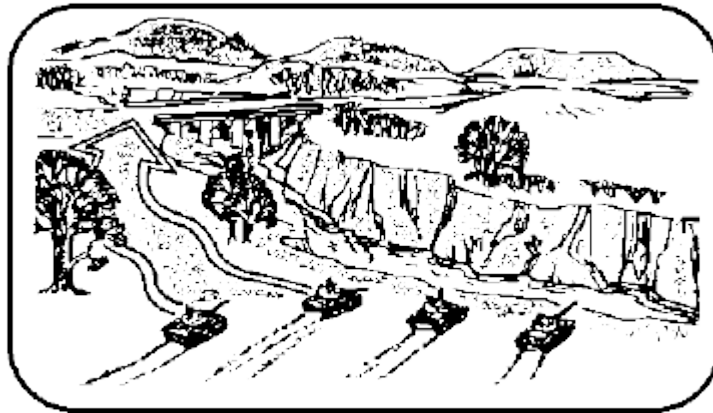


Figure 1-8. Streams, Canals, and Marshes.

- Key terrain. This is that which, if occupied, gives a marked advantage to the unit that holds it. A key terrain feature is any point or area whose seizure or control affords a marked advantage to either force. "Seizure" means physical occupation of the terrain by a force, whereas "control" may or may not include physical occupation. The selection of key terrain varies with the level of command, the type of unit, and the mission of the unit. Key terrain for a platoon's defense is that which has good observation and fields of fire. Key terrain (hills, roads, and fords) forward of the defensive position that may help attackers must be covered by fire. You and your forward observer (FO) must plan indirect fire on key terrain.
- Avenues of approach. You must analyze the avenues of approach into your position available to the enemy in terms of both foot and vehicle movement (roads, draws, or ridges). This is the basis for the deployment of men and weapons. You must also look at approaches which may be hard to traverse, but which may be used by the enemy to gain surprise.

The analysis of an avenue of approach is based on the following consideration:

- Observation and fire. (The avenue of approach provides favorable observation and fire for the force moving on it.)
- Concealment and cover. (The avenue of approach provides favorable conditions of concealment and cover. This consideration is frequently in conflict with the preceding one.)
- Obstacles. (The avenue of approach avoids obstacles that are perpendicular to the direction of advance and, whenever practical, takes advantage of those that are parallel to the direction of advance.)
- Use of key terrain.
- Adequate maneuver space.

- Ease of movement.

The analysis of an avenue of approach is based solely on terrain considerations.

3. Summary.

This concludes the discussion on Analyzing the military aspects of terrain in the defense. During this portion of the subcourse we discussed how you should analyze terrain on which you will defend, and the importance of cover and concealment, as well as the use of obstacles. We will now move to the next phase which is defense control measures.

PART C - DEFENSE CONTROL MEASURES

1. General.

Leaders use graphic control measures together with oral orders to prescribe how the defense is to be conducted. The control measures in [Figure 1-9](#) are the ones you will use:

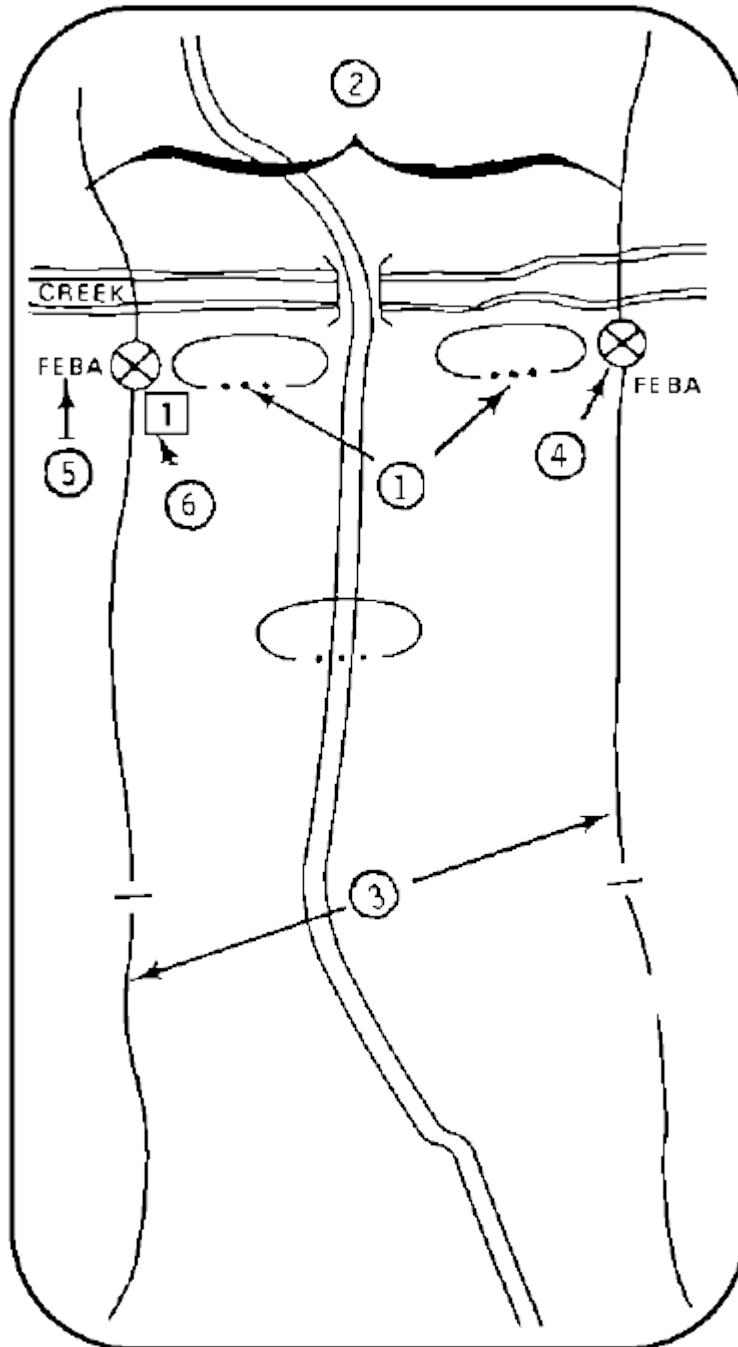


Figure 1-9. Control Measures.

- 1. Battle Position. This is the position on which a unit defends. A unit assigned a battle position is located within the general outline of the battle position. Some security elements may operate outside the battle position for early warning.
- 2. Sector. This is a defensive area designated by boundaries within which a unit operates and for which it is responsible. Companies may be assigned sectors but platoons normally are given battle positions.

- 3. Boundaries. Boundaries are used to delineate areas of responsibility of companies and higher. Platoons are not normally assigned boundaries. A unit may cross a boundary after coordinating with the adjacent unit. Units may not shoot indirect fire across boundaries without approval of the unit on the other side of the boundary. They may shoot direct fire across boundaries at positively identified enemy targets.
- 4. Coordinating Point. These are places on boundaries which serve two purposes. They indicate the ground trace of the forward edge of the battle area (FEBA), and they are the places where adjacent leaders coordinate and tie in the defense for mutual support.
- 5. Forward Edge of the Battle Area (FEBA). This is the foremost limits of the main battle area along which defending ground combat units (excluding the security force) are deployed.
- 6. Contact Point. A contact point is a place on the ground where two or more units must make physical contact.

2. Summary:

This completes lesson one. You should know how to identify and analyze the fundamentals of defense and other considerations, how to analyze the military aspects of terrain in the defense and how to identify control measures for the defense. After reviewing all the material in this lesson, you should complete the practice exercise for lesson one. Answers and feedback for the questions in the practice exercise will be provided to show you where further study is required.

LESSON 1 PRACTICAL EXERCISE

Instructions The following items will test your understanding of the material covered in this lesson. There is only one correct answer for each item. When you have completed the exercise, check your answers with the answer key that follows. If you answer any item incorrectly, review that part of the lesson which contains the portion involved.

Situation: You are a platoon leader. You are preparing your platoon to defend as part of a company in order to defeat the enemy's attack and gain the initiative. You are also analyzing military terrain and considering defense control measures needed during the operation.

1. Your company commander is applying the first means of concentrating combat power at critical times and places, he
 - ☐ a. repositions units to occupy alternate or supplementary positions in depth.
 - ☐ b. makes plans to fight as a combined arms team.
 - ☐ c. uses artillery and mortar fire.
 - ☐ d. plans for an all-round defense.
2. Your platoon is organizing a patrol. You are aware that patrolling helps the commander
 - ☐ a. keep up the offensive momentum and see the battlefield.
 - ☐ b. conduct an all-round defense.
 - ☐ c. defend in depth.
 - ☐ d. prepare and execute the active defense.
3. You are discussing cover with your squad leaders. You tell them when the men first occupy their fighting positions they
 - ☐ a. should construct a fighting position with overhead cover.
 - ☐ b. clear the foliage from the front of the position.
 - ☐ c. must construct cover capable of stopping small arms fire.
 - ☐ d. must prepare a simple prone shelter, then as time allows prepare a more fully developed position.
4. Your platoon is occupying a position in thick woods. When the riflemen and machinegunners clear a field of fire they
 - ☐ a. clear fields of fire on the ground and overhead.
 - ☐ b. leave weeds in front of their positions.
 - ☐ c. should just thin undergrowth and remove lower branches on trees.
 - ☐ d. should make sure that live foliage is not disturbed.

5. You are pointing out the limits of your platoon's battle position to your squad leaders. You
- ☐ a. explain that companies and platoons must operate within their battle positions.
 - ☐ b. state that some security elements may operate outside the battle position for early warning.
 - ☐ c. explain that the limits of a battle position are designed by boundaries.
 - ☐ d. tell them a unit assigned a battle position is located within the specific outline of the battle position.

LESSON TWO

DEFENSE PLANS, OPERATION ORDERS, AND FIGHTING POSITIONS FOR SQUAD MEMBERS

Soldiers Manual Tasks:

- 071-326-5750 Prepare and issue an oral platoon operation order for a defensive mission.
- * NSMT Identify plans for conduct of the defense by a forward rifle platoon.
- 071-326-5710 Designate fighting positions for squad members (less crew-served weapons) defense.
- * No Soldier's Manual Task.

OVERVIEW

Task
Description: Defense plans, operation orders, and fighting position for squad members.

TASKS: Identify, prepare, and issue an oral platoon operation order for a defensive mission, identify plans for conduct of the defense by a forward rifle platoon, and designate fighting positions for squad members (less crew-served weapons) in the defense.

CONDITIONS: You will be given the subcourse material for this lesson, and a training scenario. You will complete the practice exercise at the end of this lesson.

STANDARDS: The student will demonstrate his comprehension and knowledge by identifying, preparing, and issuing an oral platoon operation order for a defensive mission, identify plans for conduct of the defense by a forward rifle platoon, and designate fighting positions for squad members (less crew-served weapons) in the defense.

REFERENCES: The material contained in this lesson was derived from the following publications:
FM 7-7
FM 7-8
STP 7-11B24-SM

PART A - PREPARE AND ISSUE AN ORAL PLATOON OPERATION ORDER

1. General.

You are responsible for keeping your men informed through the squad leaders. A primary way of doing so is through the platoon order. Your platoon order is based on the operation order given by the company commanders. It must be altered to delete information that does not concern the platoon and to add sufficient detail to allow proper planning by the squad leaders.

As part of your troop leading procedure you must develop a clear and concise oral platoon order for the defense and issue it to your squad leaders. In issuing the order, you must make sure the squad leaders understand their mission and the specific coordinating instructions that apply. The order must contain the following items, properly placed in the five-paragraph format:

- The mission of the company.
- The mission of the platoon.
- The mission of each squad, to include specific areas of responsibility and provisions for security.
- Locations for machine guns and antitank weapons.
- The order and route march to the defensive area.
- Critical signal instructions.
- Locations of platoon and company command posts.

2. Operation Order.

The company commander issues an OPORD to his subordinate leaders in order to explain how the mission is to be conducted. The OPORD is issued using a five-paragraph format. This format helps the commander organize his thoughts and insures that nothing is overlooked. It also helps his subordinate leaders understand and follow the order.

The oral platoon order should follow the same basic five-paragraph format used in the company order.

PLATOON OPERATION ORDER FORMAT

- **TASK ORGANIZATION**

The task organization (TO) indicates the internal organization or tactical groupings for mission accomplishment. TO will also depict command and support relationships between units or elements and may also list names or titles assigned to tactical groupings.

1. SITUATION (paragraph 1): This paragraph provides an overview of the general situation.

a. Enemy forces (subparagraph 1a):

- (1) Situation. Composition, disposition, location, movement, morale, strength, status of supply, etc.
- (2) Capabilities. Types of vehicles, weapons, special training, NBC, etc.

(3) Most probable course of action. Attack, defend, or delay.

b. Friendly forces. (subparagraph 1b): This subparagraph contains the verbatim mission statements of higher, adjacent, and supporting or reinforcing unit's listed in the following sequence:

(1) Higher headquarters. The mission of the company.

(2) Adjacent units. Listed in sequence left, right, front, rear.

(3) Supporting or reinforcing units. Those units supporting or reinforcing the platoon (for example, engineers or ground surveillance radar team).

c. Attachments and detachments: List here units attached to or detached from the company and platoon with the effective time.

2. MISSION (paragraph 2): The mission is a clear, concise statement of the task(s) to be accomplished by the issuing unit and its purpose. The mission statement is derived from the commander's mission analysis during the decision process and it addresses the WHO, WHAT, WHEN, WHERE, and WHY of the operation. All of the mission-essential tasks (critical to the success of the operation, as determined by the commander) to be accomplished are normally addressed in chronological sequence in the mission statement. The mission is always stated in full and must stand alone without reference to any other documents except a map. Additionally, the mission statement, in addressing the "WHERE" of the operation, will always list the terrain feature (for example, "HILL 302" or "Road Junction") and grid coordinates. The terms "OBJECTIVE" and "Battle Position" may also be included if desired, but must be related to terrain features or grid coordinates.

3. EXECUTION (paragraph 3): The execution paragraph contains the "How to" information needed for mission accomplishment. This paragraph will consist of three elements: concept of the operation, subordinate unit subparagraphs, and coordinating instructions.

a. Concept of the operation (Subparagraph 3a):

(1) Scheme of maneuver. This is the statement of your visualization of the execution of an operation chronologically from start to completion. It accurately provides the subordinate elements with your intent in order that mission accomplishment is possible in the time available, and in the absence of additional communications or further instructions. The scheme of maneuver describes the employment of maneuver elements (for example, formation, order of march, a route, and actions on the objective). It includes all objectives, sectors, or battle positions for maneuver elements. Designation of a reserve will also be included in this part of the concept for any type mission.

(2) Fires. (plan fire support). Complements and supports the scheme of maneuver. It includes the priority of fire, priority targets, final protective fire (FPFs), preparatory fires (to include start time and duration) and any special fires, such as nuclear, chemical, smoke operations, or close-air support. Only indirect fires are addressed in this portion of the concept.

(3) Obstacles, mines, and fortifications. This subparagraph is always included for defensive operations. It may be included in the concept for offensive operations. Include a brief discussion of your intent or general thrust of the obstacle plan, and how it directly relates to your scheme of maneuver. Also includes priorities of obstacle work and types of operations (mobility, countermobility, and survivability may also be addressed).

(4) Intelligence and electronic warfare (IEW). May be included in the concept and includes a brief discussion of intelligence collection priorities and electronic warfare priorities. You may direct any attached surveillance assets to prioritize their efforts that are directly related to the success of the platoon operation.

b. Subordinate unit instructions (subparagraph 3b): Identifies the specific task to be accomplished by each subordinate element of the platoon; instructions presented in concept of operation may be repeated. All subordinate units must be listed. If no further instructions are to be issued, state "NONE".

c. Coordinating instructions: Last subparagraph of EXECUTION is entitled "coordinating instructions." It contains details of coordination and control applicable to two or more elements of the command issuing the order (with the exception of signal items, which are normally addressed in paragraph 5b). When there are no coordinating instructions, the word "NONE" is indicated. Typical items included in coordinating instructions are:

(1) Reports to be made other than standing operating procedure (SOP).

(2) Nuclear, biological and chemical (NBC) troop safety instructions and operational exposure guidance (OEG).

(3) Mission-oriented protective posture (MOPP) levels (if different from SOP).

(4) Air defense criteria.

(5) Consolidation/reorganization instructions.

(6) Priority intelligence requirements (PIR) (if not stated in an intelligence annex).

(7) Coordination of passage of lines.

(8) Effective date-time group (DTG) of attachments/detachments (if not listed in TASK ORG or paragraph 1c).

(9) Effective DTG or conditions. The DTG order or operation plan (OPLAN) becomes effective when the order or plan is not effective upon receipt.

4. SERVICE SUPPORT (paragraph 4): This paragraph contains combat service support (CSS) instructions and information relating to the operation. (NOTE: Reference may be made to unit SOP if appropriate; items not required are omitted.)

a. Material and service. Status of classes of supply; transportation, services, and maintenance.

b. Medical evacuation and hospitalization.

- c. Personnel. Unit strengths, replacements, maintenance of morale, discipline, law and order, and headquarters management.
- d. Civil-military cooperation. Limitations or restrictions concerning local area; psychological operations.
- e. Miscellaneous. Prisoner of war (PW) procedures.
- f. Combat service support facilities. The locations and proposed locations of CSS facilities (combat or field trains) may be indicated; however, this may not be necessary if shown graphically on an overlay.

5. COMMAND AND SIGNAL (paragraph 5): This paragraph contains instructions and information relating to command and to functions of communications-electronics (CE). It will contain two subparagraphs entitled "command" and "signal" in that sequence. Items addressed are as follows:

- a. Command (subparagraph 5a). As a minimum, will include the initial location of the commander (to facilitate messenger operations if it becomes necessary). It may also include the command post (CP) locations (required if CP locations are not shown graphically) and CP axis of displacement. Succession of command may be indicated if different from SOP.
- b. Signal (subparagraph 5b). As a minimum, will list the Communications-Electronics Operations Instructions (CEOI) index by specific number in effect for the operation as well as any changes scheduled during the period of the operation. May also list alternate or emergency signals (pyrotechnics, etc.) and any signal restrictions, such as "radio listening silence." Detailed signal instructions normally will be included in a CE annex.

As the platoon leader, you must look for items in the company order that must be altered to fit the platoon's mission. For example, assume that paragraphs 2 and 3 of the company order are given as:

"2. MISSION: Company A defends by 251400 Jun from FL140810 to FL160810.

"3. EXECUTION: The company will defend employing 1st Platoon on the left, 2d Platoon on the right, and 3d Platoon in reserve...."

You might alter those paragraphs as follows:

"2. MISSION: 2d Platoon defends by 251400 Jun from FL159810 to FL160810.

"3. EXECUTION: 2d Platoon will defend in sector, with 1st Squad on the left, 2d Squad in the center, and 3d Squad on the right. 1st Squad will occupy from

Paragraph 1 of the platoon order should contain the mission of the company that was stated in paragraph 2 of the company order. Paragraphs 4 and 5 will be similar to paragraphs 4 and 5 of the company order, but narrowed down to apply only to the platoon. For example, if paragraph 4 of the company order gives the location of the battalion field trains, the platoon order will probably not contain that information because it does not directly affect the squads. Your responsibility is to give the men the information that pertains to them. The five-paragraph order format should be used as a

checklist to prevent omitting important information. It is not all inclusive, however, and may be modified as necessary.

Whenever possible, you should give the order to the squad leaders from a vantage point on or near the ground to be defended. From such a point, it is possible to orient the squad leaders by pointing out important terrain features. However, many times this will not be possible, and you will have to sketch the terrain on the ground. Terrain models are easy to construct, and they allow you to relate the order to terrain features.

3. Summary.

This concludes the discussion on preparing and issuing an oral platoon operation order. During this portion of the subcourse we discussed the platoon leader's responsibility to issue the order, formats, elements and how to alter the company order to fit the platoon's mission. We also discussed the importance of developing a clear and concise oral platoon order that covers the situation, mission, execution, service support and command and signal instructions. Specific guidance of what each of these elements must contain was discussed. We will now move to the next phase which is planning the defense for a forward rifle platoon.

PART B - PLAN DEFENSE FOR A FORWARD RIFLE PLATOON

1. Defense Plan.

After receiving the mission to defend, and after considering METT-T, you must develop a defense plan. Your defense plan includes:

- the deployment of squads,
- the deployment of machineguns and Dragons,
- the use of indirect fire,
- the use of mines and obstacles,
- security measures, and
- the selection and operation of a command post-observation post (CP-OP).

2. Deployment of Squads.

Your squads are generally deployed abreast so they all can shoot toward the expected direction of attack. On ideal terrain, a squad is capable of defending a front of about 100 meters. About 25 meters is added to the squad front for each machinegun in its sector. The distance between two-man positions should be about 20 meters; between one-man positions, 10 meters.

You give each squad a position to defend and a sector of fire. The center squad's sector of fire overlaps the sectors of fire of the flank squads. Each flank squad's sector of fire overlaps the sector of fire of the center squad and that of an adjacent platoon ([Figure 2-1](#)).

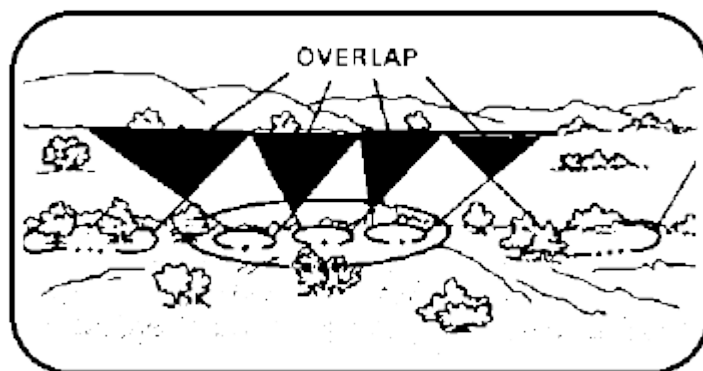


Figure 2-1. Sectors of Fire Overlap.

The squads prepare and occupy primary positions. They may also prepare supplementary positions. These are prepared the same as the primary positions, but are oriented in a different direction. In time, trenches are dug to provide covered routes to supplementary positions. Squads do not normally have alternate positions, but they do have a portion of the platoon's alternate position ([Figure 2-2](#)).

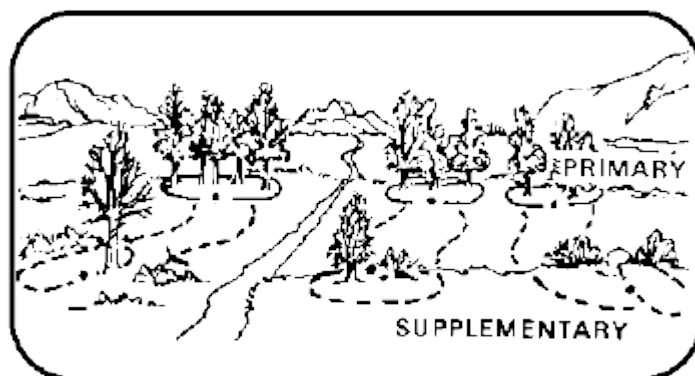


Figure 2-2. Positions.

3. Deployment of Machineguns and Dragons.

You pick the machinegun and Dragon positions.

- Machineguns. Your machineguns are the platoon's main weapons for stopping infantry attacks. Positions and sectors of fire should:
 - cover infantry avenues of approach, and
 - shoot the most grazing fire possible across the platoon's front.

Their sectors of fire should overlap each other and those of adjacent platoons.

Each gun is given a primary and secondary sector of fire. A gunner shoots in his secondary sector only if there are no targets in his primary sector, or if ordered to. Each gun's primary sector includes a final protective line (FPL) or a principal direction of fire (PDF).

- Final protective line. Where terrain allows, you assign a machinegun an FPL. The FPL is a line on which the gun shoots grazing fire across the platoon's front. Grazing fire is no more than 1 meter above the ground (about hip high). Fire on a gun's FPL is its final protective fire (FPF). It is fired on your command and in conjunction with the FPF of indirect fire weapons.

Deadspace on the FPL is found by having a man walk the FPL ([Figure 2-3](#)). The gunner watches the man walking down the line and marks spaces which cannot be grazed. The deadspace is covered with obstacles, grenade launcher fire, or mines, and is recorded on the range card.

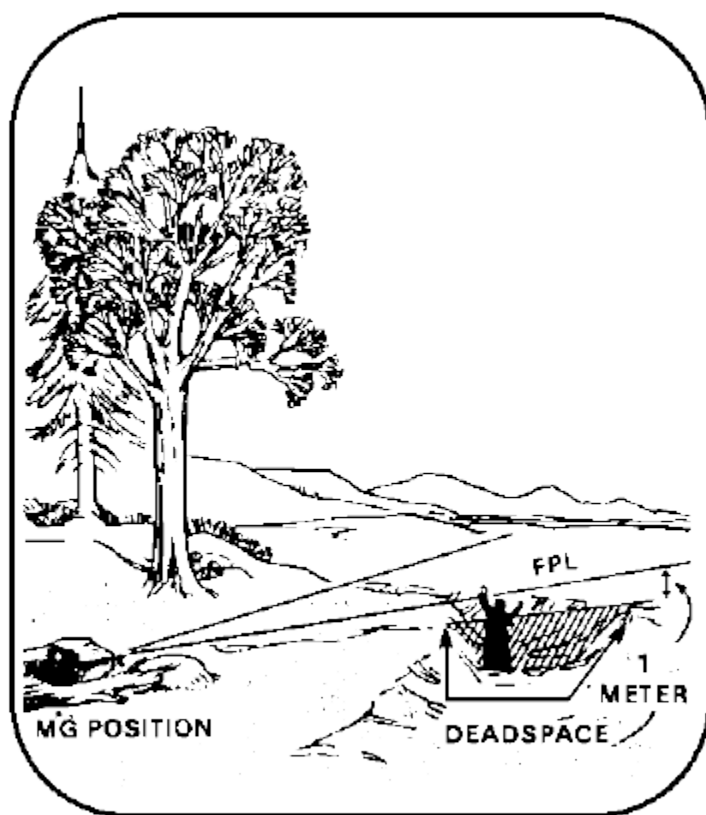


Figure 2-3. Finding Deadspace on FPL.

Principle direction of fire. When the terrain does not lend itself to an FPL, you assign the machinegun a PDF instead. This should be toward a gully or down a ditch which leads into the position. The gun is positioned to fire directly down this approach rather than across the platoon's front ([Figure 2-4](#)).

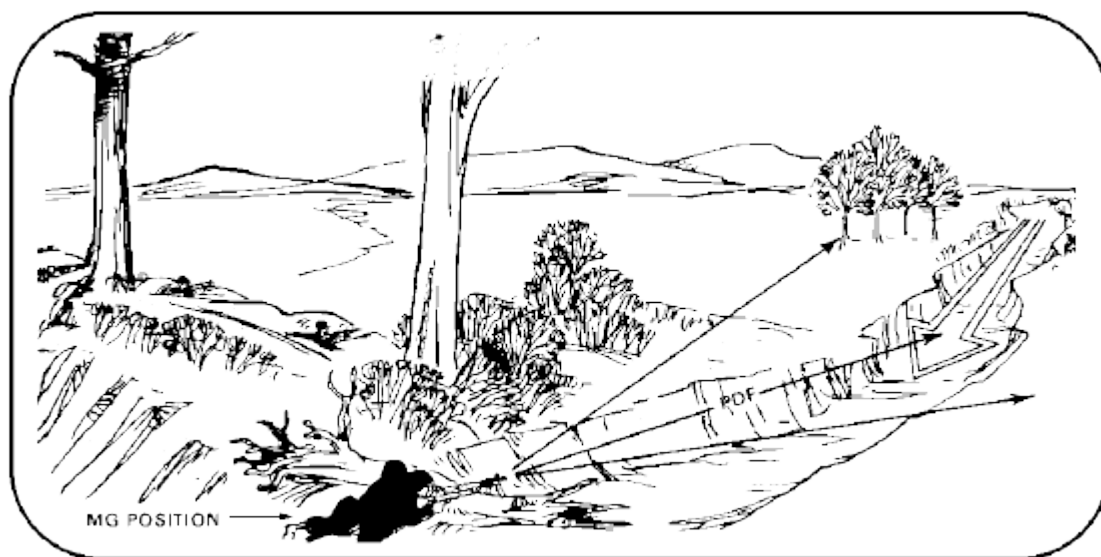


Figure 2-4. Principal Direction of Fire.

Gunners lay the machineguns on their FPL or PDF when not shooting. Once the machineguns are sited, the squad leader positions riflemen to protect them and to cover areas not covered by their fire.

- **Dragons.** Dragons are the platoon's main antiarmor weapon. They are positioned to cover armor avenues of approach. You pick a position and a sector of fire for each Dragon. You may also pick alternate and supplementary positions for them. Each position should allow flank fire and have cover and concealment. Dragons need covered routes between their positions.

4. Range Cards.

A range card is a rough sketch of the terrain around a weapon ([Figure 2-5](#)). It is prepared for each machinegun and Dragon. The card shows sectors of fire, FPL or PDF of the machineguns, targets and ranges to them, and, in the case of the Dragons, target reference points. Gunners prepare a least two copies of a range card. The gunner keeps one copy with the gun and gives one copy to you to help you make a platoon sector sketch.

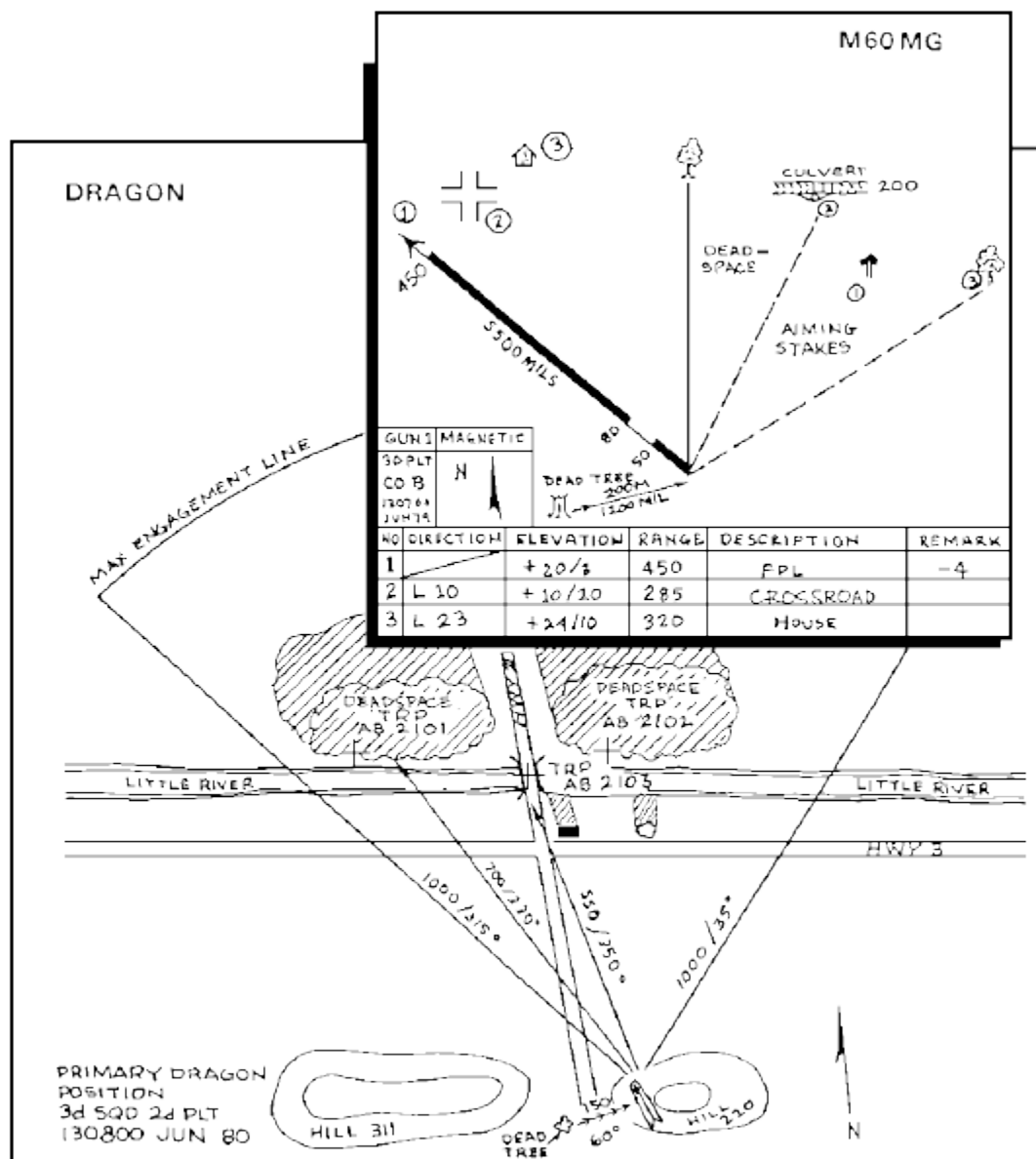


Figure 2-5. Range Cards.

5. Use of Indirect Fire.

Most indirect fire planning is done by the company commander and the fire support team (FIST) chief. A copy of the planned target list will be given to you. You and your FO check the target list to insure that fire is planned on all enemy avenues of approach and on known or likely enemy positions in the platoon sector of fire. If additional targets are needed, the FO requests them through the FIST chief. The targets that are planned to control and direct the Dragons and any other direct fire weapons are called target reference points (TRPs).

The company commander may assign an FPF to a platoon. An FPF is a prearranged barrier of fire. You must plan its location with the FO and the FIST chief. It should cover the most threatening approach.

The FPF is planned close to the platoon position, but not so close that it endangers troops. When assigned an FPF, you will have the authority to call for it if the company commander does not retain this authority. It should only be fired to stop an enemy assault. On signal, it is fired continuously until it is ordered stopped. All other platoon weapons will fire while the FPF is being fired.

6. Use of Mines and Obstacles.

You improve your defense by the use of mines, barbed wire, and tripflares. Antipersonnel (AP) mines are emplaced on infantry avenues of approach. Both antitank (AT) and AP mines are emplaced on armor avenues of approach. The AP mines are needed to protect the AT mines and cover the likely avenues of approach for enemy infantry.

7. Security Measures.

You must establish a security system for your platoon to keep the enemy from observing or surprising the platoon. You base this system on orders received from your company commander, the enemy situation, and the terrain and visibility conditions. The system provides for both active and passive measures.

- Active Security Measures. A company commander may require a platoon to have a set number of OPs and a set number of men on security. If he does not, you decide what you need. There should be at least one OP per platoon. In close terrain, there may be one per squad.

You also establish security within the platoon's position. You require a set number of men to be on security at all times. The number will vary with the enemy situation, terrain, and visibility. As a guide, at least one third of the platoon's troops should be on security at all times.

When an attack is expected, the entire platoon should be on security. This degree of security should not be maintained for extended periods. You must keep in mind that your men need rest in order to function in future operations. Security, however, cannot be sacrificed for rest.

A man on security must be awake, fully dressed, manning his weapon, observing his primary sector of fire, and listening for enemy activity. In Dragon and machinegun positions, the man on security mans the weapon even if it is not his assigned weapon. You must explain to men on security what to do if they hear or observe enemy activity.

A stand-to is held both morning and evening to insure that every man adjusts to the changing light and noise conditions, and is dressed, equipped, and ready for action. The stand-to should start before first light in the morning and continue until after light. It should start before dark in the evening and last until after dark. The starting and ending times should vary to prevent establishing a pattern, but the stand-to must last long enough to accomplish its purpose.

- Passive Security Measures. Passive security measures include camouflage of positions, control of movement, light and noise discipline, and limiting radio traffic.

8. Selection and Operation of a Command Post-Observation Post.

You locate your CP-OP in a place from which you can best see and control the platoon. If you cannot see and control all of it from one place, locate the CP-OP so that you can see and control that part of the

platoon covering the most likely enemy approach. An alternate CP-OP is located in a place from which to see and control that part of the platoon that cannot be seen or controlled from the primary CP-OP. Your platoon sergeant operates the alternate CP-OP ([Figure 2-6](#)).

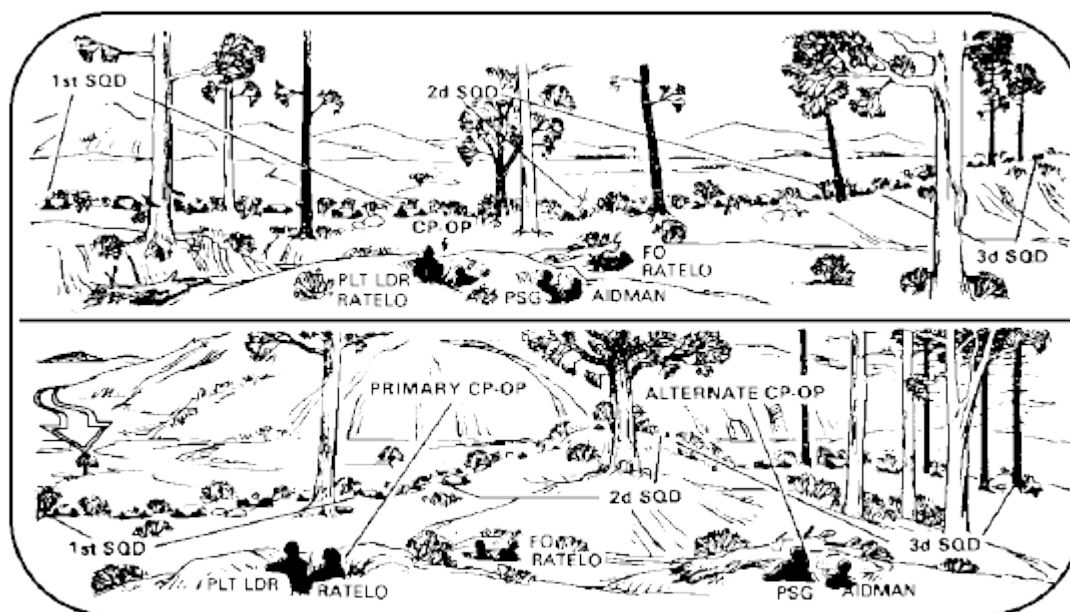


Figure 2-6. Command-Post-Observation Post.

The platoon CP-OP is tied into the company wire net by a TA-312 field phone, and into the company radio net by a AN/PRC-77 radio. The platoon has its own platoon radio and wire nets.

Additional phones may be issued to the platoon for use on OPs. The primary means of communication between the platoon leader and squad leaders is wire. Messengers, visual signals, personal contact, or whistles may be used when more appropriate than phones and radios, or when phones and radios do not work.

Squad leaders communicate with their fire team leaders and their men by personal contact (oral orders), or by sound and visual signals.

9. Sector Sketches.

A sector sketch consists of a rough drawing, as close to scale as possible.

- Squad Sector Sketch. Each squad leader prepares a sector sketch to help him plan his defense and to help him control fire. It shows:
 - the main terrain features in his sector of fire and the ranges to them;
 - each primary fighting position;
 - the primary and secondary sectors of fire of each position;
 - the type weapon in each position;
 - OPs and squad leader's positions;

- deadspace; and
- obstacles.
- Platoon Sector Sketch. You check range cards and squad sector sketches. If you find gaps or other flaws in the fire plan, you adjust the weapons or sectors as necessary. If you find any deadspace, you take steps to cover it with mines, grenade launcher fire, or indirect fire. You then make the platoon sector sketch ([Figure 2-7](#)). It shows:
 - squad sectors of fires;
 - machinegun and Dragon positions and sectors of fire to include FPLs and PDFs of the machineguns and TRPs for the Dragons;
 - mines and obstacles;
 - indirect fire planned in the platoon's sector of fire (targets and FPF);
 - OPs and patrol routes (if any); and
 - the platoon CP-OP.

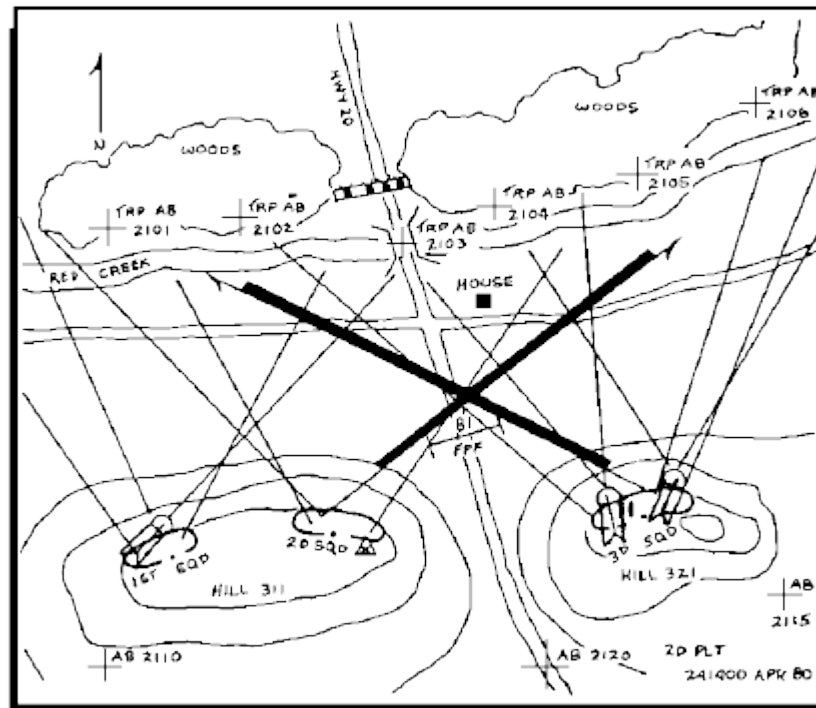


Figure 2-7. Platoon Sector Sketch.

You make your sector sketch in two copies. You keep one and give one copy to your commander.

10. Summary.

This concludes the discussion on planning the defense for a forward rifle platoon. During this portion of the subcourse we discussed preparation of defense plans, deployment of machineguns and Dragons,

DPL, PDF preparation of range cards, use of indirect fire, security measures, OPs and CPs and preparation of sector sketches. We will now move to the next phase which is designating fighting positions for squad members (less crew-served weapons).

PART C - DESIGNATE FIGHTING POSITIONS FOR SQUAD MEMBERS

General

As discussed in lesson one, a well built fighting position gives the defender a marked advantage over the attacker and enhances his weapons' firing capability. Fighting positions must provide cover and concealment against aerial and ground fire and observation, and provide for mutual support among fighting positions', observation, and fields of fire.

As a platoon leader, you give each squad a requirement to occupy a specified area within the platoon defensive position and to cover a specified sector of fire.

The squad occupies the specified area and can fire into the assigned sector. The squad's firing positions are such that:

- Each position's fires interlock at a point beyond hand grenade range (35 meters).
- Flank weapon fires tie in with adjacent squads.
- Each position has cover and concealment (natural, if available) and good fields of fire.
- All positions are sited so that they are mutually supporting.
- Automatic rifle fires cover areas not covered by the M60 machinegun.
- Grenade fires cover deadspace in the squad sector.
- Claymores supplement all other fires.
- The squad leader's position is located where he can observe and control the fires of his squad.

When you designate fighting positions, you must ensure that:

- Each position has cover, concealment, and good fields of fire. To ensure this, try to position weapons so that their fires overlap, mutually support each other, and can be integrated, so that you can place heavy surprise fire on the enemy. Look for routes that will provide the attacker cover and positions from which he can mass his fire on your position. Be sure your entire squad sector is covered so that you can repel any assault.
- When your key weapons have been positioned, the men in the squad are positioned to protect those weapons from a dismounted assault. You must consider the number of men available, then position each one so that he can support the men on his right and left. Each sector of fire must cross in front of another position at a point, as stated, beyond hand grenade range. Site each fighting position using natural cover and concealment, then:
 - Clear fields of fire to allow each man to do the job for which he is positioned. Do not overclear.

- Build artificial cover, such as a parapet, if required.
- Hide everything.
- Insure that all enemy approaches into a squad's sector are adequately covered by automatic weapons fire.
- Prior to digging in, you must move to the front of the position to insure that each fighting position has frontal cover from enemy fire and all positions are mutually supporting.
- As discussed in lesson one, a good fighting position should allow you to see and fire to the front when not receiving effective direct fire. But, if effective direct fire is received, the soldier can move behind frontal cover and fire to the oblique (Figure 2-8).

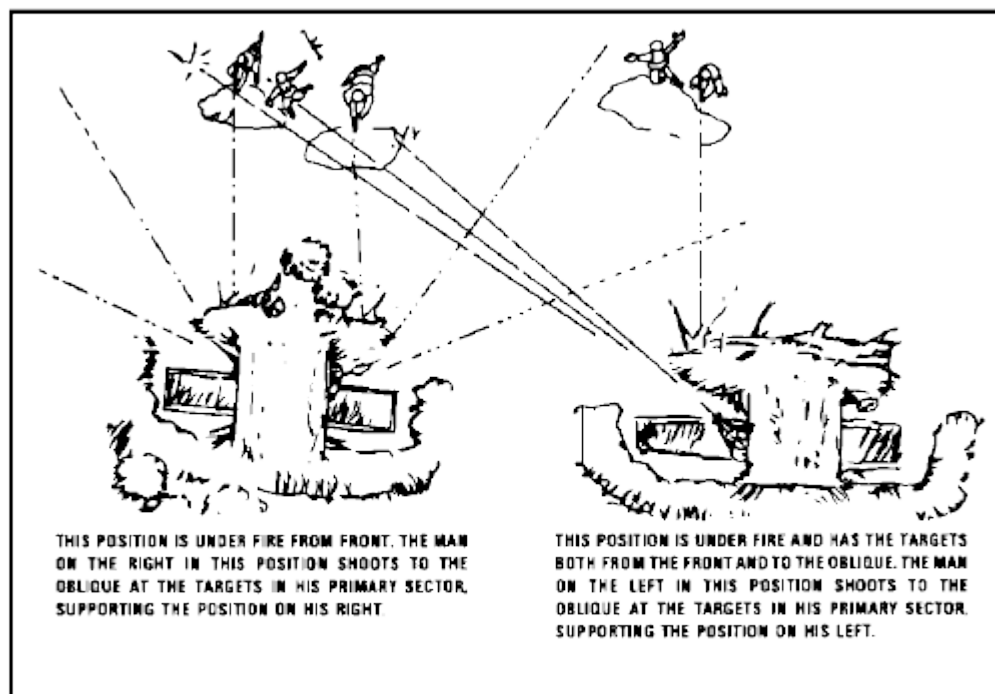


Figure 2-8. Fighting Positions.

When you are positioning each weapon of a rifle squad, you should follow the procedures outlined below:

- Automatic Riflemen. Identify dismounted avenues of approach, such as ravines, draws, and heavily wooded or brush areas, that are not covered with the machinegun. In areas covered by the machinegun, find out what deadspace the machinegun has and cover it with automatic rifle (AR) fire, if possible. If there is no deadspace, assign a sector that will interlock with and overlap the machinegun's sector and final protective fire.
- Grenadiers. Position grenade launchers to cover the deadspaces of the automatic weapon's final protective fire. They must also be positioned to cover the entire squad's sector.

- Riflemen. Position riflemen between the remaining positions to give continuous observation and fire throughout the squad sector. They provide mutual support between positions and identify targets for the squad's and platoon's key weapons (grenade launchers, ARs, machineguns, and Dragons).
- Claymore Mines. Use these to cover any deadspace that cannot be covered with 40-mm grenade launchers, and to supplement the fire of your riflemen.

The squad leader must select a position from which he can control the fires of his squad. He uses his weapon only when necessary to protect himself, to direct fire, or to influence the action at a critical point. If he has enough men, he positions himself slightly behind the squad so that he can observe and contact the squad, or at least his team leaders. If his squad's strength is reduced, or the terrain does not permit him to establish a position to the rear, he must man a forward position. In this case, he may have to construct a single position to be able to observe his squad's sector. The squad leader must be able to maintain contact with you and his fire team leaders from whatever position he selects. He should look for covered routes that he can use to move to his team leader's positions and to your position.

This completes lesson two. You should know how to prepare and issue an oral platoon operation order, plan defense for a forward rifle platoon and how to designate fighting positions for squad members (less crew-served weapons). After reviewing all the material in this lesson, you should complete the practice exercise for lesson two. Answers and feedback for the question in the practice exercise will be provided to show you where further study is required.

LESSON 2 PRACTICAL EXERCISE

Instructions The following items will test your understanding of the material covered in this lesson. There is only one correct answer for each item. When you have completed the exercise, check your answers with the answer key that follows. If you answer any item incorrectly, review that part of the lesson which contains the portion involved.

Situation: You are a platoon leader. You are preparing to issue your platoon defensive OPORD for conduct of the defense by a forward rifle platoon. Your squad leader will designate fighting positions for their men.

1. You explain to your squad leaders that when they issue the mission paragraph of their squad OPORD to
 - ☐a. make sure it is derived from their METT-T analysis.
 - ☐b. supplement the mission statement with appropriate reference to the tactical SOP.
 - ☐c. state the mission in full, so that it can stand alone without reference to any other document except a map.
 - ☐d. use the verbatim mission statement the company commander issued

2. You are planning the defense for your forward rifle platoon. When considering security measures, you
 - ☐a. are aware that a company commander may require you to have a set number of OPs and a set number of men on security.
 - ☐b. base your system on METT-T considerations.
 - ☐c. are primarily concerned about protecting your platoon from enemy observation.
 - ☐d. must ensure that dragon and machinegun positions are always manned by the assigned gunner.

3. Use Figure 1. You are reviewing your 3d squad's sector sketch. You notice the squad leader

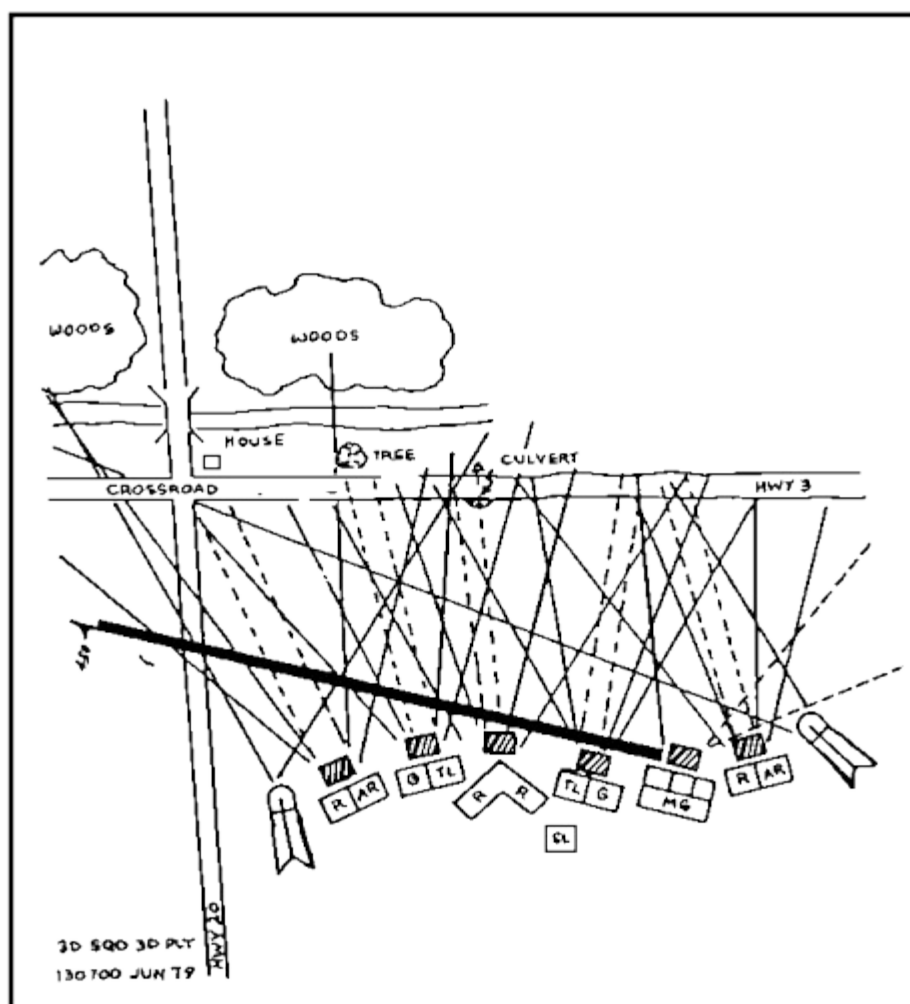


Figure 1. Squad Sector Sketch.

- a. did not identify obstacles.
 - b. failed to list ranges to the main terrain features.
 - c. did not show primary and secondary sector of fire for each position.
 - d. failed to show the primary positions for both his machineguns.
4. The 1st squad leader is designating fighting positions for his squad. He
- a. must position his key weapons so they are protected from a mounted assault.
 - b. selects the positions based on the company commanders visualization of the battle.
 - c. must site each position based on the natural concealment available.
 - d. must ensure the positions provide for mutual support with other fighting positions, observation, and a good field of fire.

LESSON THREE

COORDINATING WITH ADJACENT PLATOONS, AND EXECUTING A PLATOON DEFENSE

Soldiers Manual Tasks:

071-326-5775 Coordinate with adjacent platoons.
071-430-0006 Conduct a rifle platoon defense.

OVERVIEW

Task Coordinate with Adjacent Platoons; and Execute a Platoon Defense.
Description:

TASKS: Identify how to coordinate with adjacent platoons, and how to execute a rifle platoon defense.

CONDITIONS: You will be given the subcourse material for this lesson, and a training scenario. You will complete the practice exercise at the end of this lesson.

STANDARDS: The student will demonstrate his comprehension and knowledge by identifying how to coordinate with adjacent platoons, and how to execute a rifle platoon defense.

REFERENCES: The material in this lesson was derived from the following publications:
FM 7-8
FM 21-3

PART A - COORDINATE WITH ADJACENT PLATOONS

1. General.

Coordination is normally conducted from left to right, and from front to rear. You, as the platoon leader, coordinate with adjacent platoons, and your squad leaders coordinate with adjacent squads, to see that all positions and all units are mutually supporting. This coordination will also ensure that any gaps between units are covered by either fire, observation, patrols, OPs or sensors. Information exchanged includes:

- Location of primary, alternate, and supplementary positions and sectors of fire of machineguns, Dragons, and subordinate units.
- Location of deadspace between units and how to cover it.
- Location of OPs.
- Location and types of obstacles and how to cover them.

- Patrols to be conducted to include their size, type, time of departure and return, and routes.

You must coordinate with adjacent platoon-size elements well enough to:

- Insure that no gaps exist between your element and an adjacent element.
- Insure that the fires of your element and an adjacent element are interlocking.
- Insure that movement routes, in the offense, will allow mutual support by fire and/or maneuver.

When you receive an order for a defensive operation and begin your planning phase, you must consider coordination with adjacent elements. If you receive the order while all other platoon-size-element leaders are present, take the opportunity to coordinate as much as possible to avoid delays later in the operation. While many of the details that must be coordinated will vary with the situation, essential items must always be coordinated.

In the defense, you must coordinate to insure that there are no gaps, and that fires interlock and are mutually supporting. Information coordinated includes:

- Location of positions (primary, alternate, and supplementary).
- Location of key weapons.
- Sectors of fire.
- Deadspace between units.
- Location of observation posts (OPs).
- Signals.
- Patrols and ambushes (size, type, time of departure and a return, and routes).
- Location and types of obstacles.

If a final protective fire is allocated to your platoon, it must be coordinated with the FIST FO and be integrated into your platoon's fire plan for the element.

2. Summary.

This concludes the discussion on coordinating with adjacent platoons. During this portion of the subcourse we discussed the importance of coordinating to ensure no gaps exist, and fires are interlocked. We will now move to the next phase which is executing a rifle platoon defense.

PART B - EXECUTE A RIFLE PLATOON DEFENSE

1. General.

The conduct of a defense by a forward platoon starts when the platoon sees and shoots at the enemy. As the enemy advances, he is brought under an increasing volume of fire. Men in OPs report information about the enemy, and the FO calls for and adjusts indirect fire. When the enemy's advance threatens the OPs, they are withdrawn by you.

All leaders and the FO search for indirect fire targets. If no enemy armor appears, Dragons may shoot at other vehicles or crew-served weapons. If no suitable targets appear, Dragon gunners withhold their fire and shoot their rifles. Machinegunners, automatic riflemen, riflemen, and grenadiers shoot at targets in their sectors.

The rate of fire should increase as the enemy approaches the platoon position. If tanks and infantry are attacking, fire is placed to force tanks to button up, and to separate foot troops from tanks.

If attacking formations are not broken up forward of the platoon's position, the enemy will assault. You then call for your FPF. Machineguns that have an FPL shoot on the FPL. Those that do not have an FPL shoot along their PDF. Mortars and artillery shoot FPF. All other weapons shoot during the firing of the FPF. They shoot until the assault has been halted. A prearranged signal, such as a flare, is used to stop the firing when the assault has been halted. An FPF expends a lot of ammunition, therefore, it should not be called for unless necessary to stop an enemy assault from closing on the position. If the enemy gets through the FPF, he is repelled by close combat. If the platoon is threatened from the flanks or rear, you may move your troops to fight from supplementary positions.

If the enemy is repelled, local security is again sent out and patrols may be sent forward to retain contact. Indirect fire is called on areas where the enemy is likely to regroup. Squads reorganize. Your platoon sergeant controls the evacuation of seriously wounded casualties, and the redistribution and resupply of ammunition. Troops make repairs on positions and continue to improve them.

During the conduct of the defense, all leaders keep their next higher commander informed. You and your squad leaders do not fire except in close combat or when the fire is required. You and the squad leaders may fire to point out a target or as a signal to open fire. The main concern is with directing and controlling the fire of the men and any supporting fire.

There are several important activities leaders must concern themselves with during the defense, leaders must:

- Supervise to see that the security system is followed.
- Control and direct fire.
- Call for and adjust supporting fire.
- Move men within the platoon position.
- Provide more ammunition and equipment as needed.
- Reorganize and reestablish the defense during lulls in combat.

2. Conduct of the Defense when Visibility is Poor.

When visibility is poor, patrols, OPs and night vision devices help detect the advance of the enemy.

Local security elements report the enemy's advance and call for illumination and supporting fire. As in a daylight defense, troops in OPs are withdrawn before they become engaged in close combat.

As the enemy approaches, illumination and night vision devices are used to detect him. Tripflares give warning and some illumination. When surprise is desired, troops fire on order only. As a rule, troops do

not shoot until targets are visible. Strict fire control is needed to prevent the disclosure of fighting positions. Machineguns and Dragons use night vision devices and range cards. All troops use aiming stakes. If the company commander has used mortars or artillery to provide illumination, your platoon can add to this as required with grenade launchers using illuminating rounds.

3. Reserve Of A Forward Rifle Company.

If a forward company has a reserve, it may be positioned in the rear of the forward platoons. The reserve may be a platoon, one or two squads, or formed from available personnel in the company headquarters or weapons platoon. It adds depth to the company's defense. The commander gives the reserve a primary position and one or more supplementary positions. It may move from one position to another as required. If your platoon has been designated as the reserve, it may have one or more of the following missions, generally assigned in a priority:

- Block penetrations.
- Secure the company flanks and rear.
- Support a forward platoon by fire.
- Man OPs and conduct security patrols.
- Prepare to counterattack.
- Evacuate prisoners.

You organize a reserve position in about the same manner as that of a forward platoon or squad. As it has a greater area of responsibility, and because it will have more avenues of approach to cover, it normally has one machinegun on each flank. The machineguns do not have FPLs. As the reserve, you normally plan no indirect FPF. Except for that, the fire plan is the same as that of a forward platoon or squad.

The reserve CP-OP is where you can best see your area of responsibility and control your fire. It should have observation of the forward platoons' positions and the company flanks and rear.

You post local security just like a forward platoon or squad.

4. Missions of the Reserve.

- Block Penetrations. Your reserve platoon blocks an enemy penetration by fire ([Figure 3-1](#)). The forward platoons help by shooting across the neck and flanks of the penetration. They continue to hold their flanks. When you are blocking a penetration, a counterattack to eject the penetrating force is usually made by the battalion reserve. Indirect fire helps to contain and reduce the penetration.

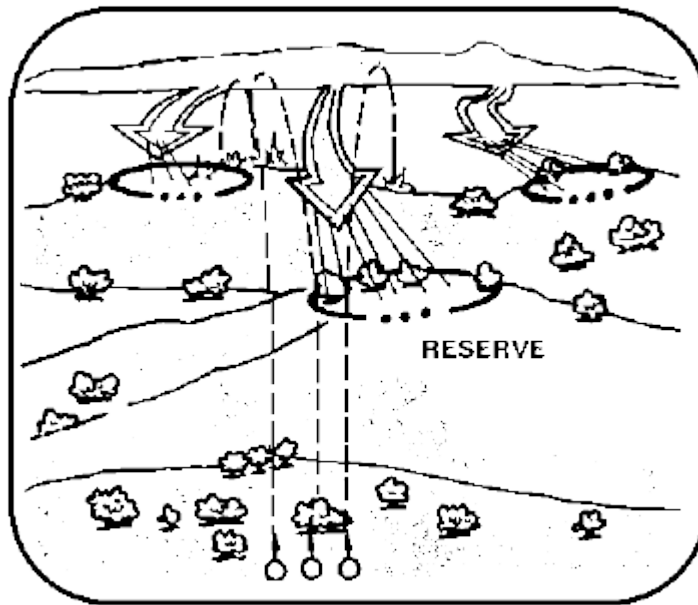


Figure 3-1. Block Penetrations.

- Secure the Company Flanks and Rear. You prepare supplementary positions to protect the company flanks and rear. The company commander tells you which approaches to block. To protect a flank, the reserve's position must tie in with the supplementary positions of the forward platoons and with adjacent units. Your reserve platoon may have to take a position to protect a flank when the sector of an adjacent company has been penetrated. ([Figure 3-2](#)).

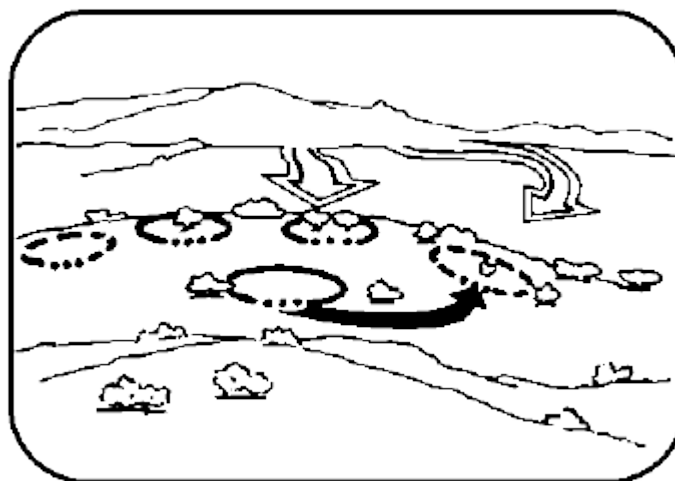


Figure 3-2. Secure Flanks.

- Support a Forward Platoon by Fire. For this mission, your reserve platoon is positioned where it can shoot into unoccupied areas between forward platoons and on their flanks and rear. The position must be close enough to the forward platoon's primary position so that it can hit enemy

troops that penetrate that position. Your platoon is normally kept intact and is moved by the company commander as the situation dictates. ([Figure 3-3](#)).

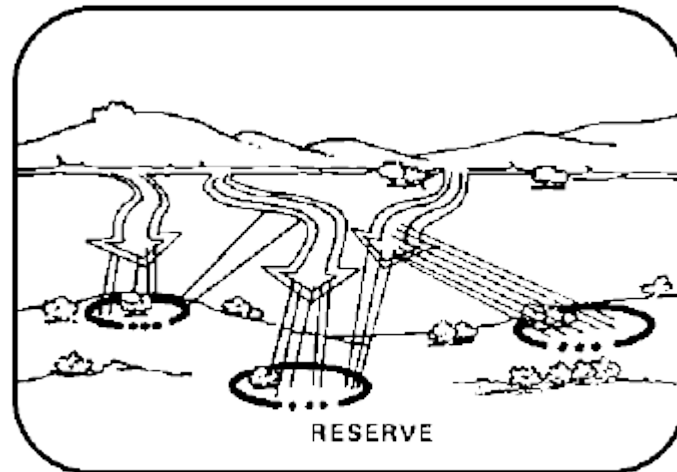


Figure 3-3. Support Forward Platoon.

- OPs and Security Patrols. The commander prescribes what security and surveillance responsibilities the reserve will have. These may require the use of guards, OPs, and security patrols. You may have nuclear, biological and chemical (NBC) detection devices, night vision devices, tripflares, antipersonnel mines, and noisemaking devices for early warning. You may post guards for the company CP, mortar squads, and crews of supporting weapons in the company sector. OPs watch unoccupied parts of the company sector. They watch avenues of approach and key terrain. Security patrols reconnoiter those areas which cannot be seen by other means and keep contact with adjacent units. They can also be a means of communications between OPs ([Figure 3-4](#)).

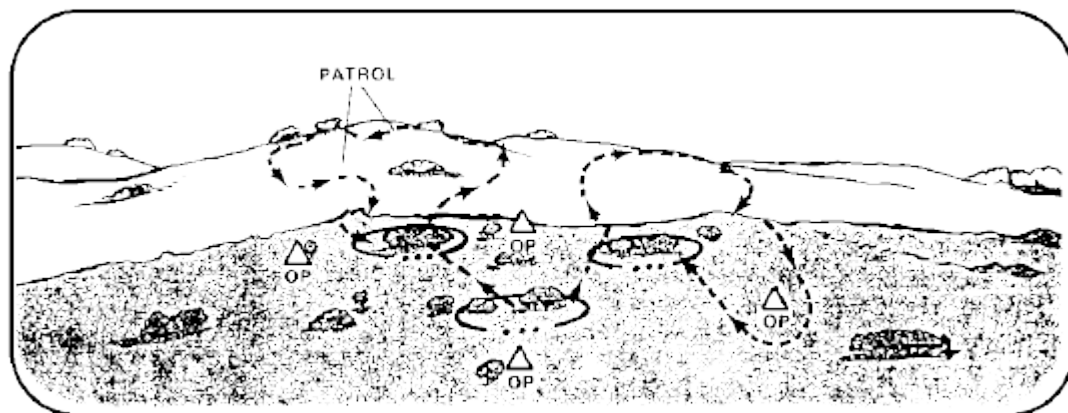


Figure 3-4. Observation Posts and Security Patrols.

- Counterattack. The objective of a counterattack is normally to destroy the enemy in a penetration or eject him from the penetration. You plan a counterattack on one or more likely penetrations. Each is a complete attack plan. Each has a tentative objective and a direction of attack. A plan may have an line of departure (LD) and an attack position. With time, each counterattack plan is rehearsed. At least, a dry run or walkthrough of the attack is done. This helps inform the forward platoons of the plans. You conduct your other tasks until the counterattack order is given. Your platoon must then attack with speed and fury. It must be given massed fire support ([Figure 3-5](#)).

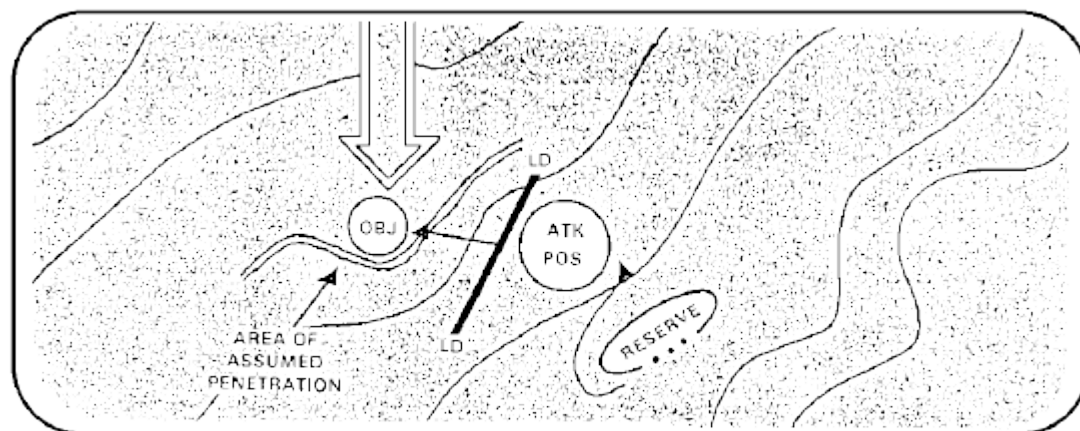


Figure 3-5. Counterattack.

5. Planning.

Your planning as the leader of the reserve is much the same as that by the forward platoon or squad, with these exceptions:

- Because of the variety of missions and positions which the reserve may have, reconnaissance and planning are more extensive.
- Coordination must be made with all nearby units.
- You must know the defensive plans of forward platoons and adjacent companies.

6. Preparation and Conduct of the Defense by the Reserve.

The preparation of the reserve's positions is much the same as that of a forward platoon or squad, with these exceptions:

- Because of the number of supplementary positions, the reserve may work on two or more positions at the same time. The positions are continually improved. The reserve occupies its primary position and is ready to move to supplementary positions at any time.
- You must be able to assemble your troops quickly from widely separated positions at any time.

7. Other Positioning Techniques.

When your platoon is defending, you may have to deviate from the defense pattern described in Part A lesson one. Such deviations may include defending on a reserve slope, in a perimeter, or as a roadblock.

- **Defense On A Reverse Slope.** An infantry company may organize a defense on the reverse slope of a hill. This defense is on that part of a hill or ridge which is masked by the crest from enemy direct fire and ground observation. The crest must be controlled either by fire or by physical occupation.

Your platoon may defend from a reverse slope position when:

- the forward slope can not be occupied because of enemy fire,
- the terrain on the reverse slope affords better fields of fire than the forward slope,
- possession of the forward slope is not essential for observation, or
- defense from the reverse slope will deceive and surprise the enemy.

The advantages of defending from a reverse slope are:

- Enemy ground observation of the position is masked.
- There is more freedom of movement on the position due to the enemy's lack of ground observation.
- Enemy direct fire weapons cannot hit the position.
- Enemy indirect fire is less effective because of lack of observation.
- The defender gains surprise.

Disadvantages of defending from a reverse slope are:

- Fields of fire and observation for direct fire are probably short.
- The enemy may seize the high ground in an attack and his assault will then be downhill.

Forward platoons are positioned from 200 to 500 meters from the crest of the hill where they can have the best fields of fire and still have the advantages of the reverse slope.

If it can be in supporting distance, an overwatching platoon is positioned on the forward slope of the next high ground to the rear.

Indirect FPFs are planned on or short of the crest of the hill to deny that area to the enemy and to help break up his assault as he crosses the crest.

You position OPs on, or just forward of, the crest to watch the whole platoon sector of fire. The OPs may vary in size from two men to a squad reinforced with machineguns and antitank weapons ([Figure 3-6](#)).

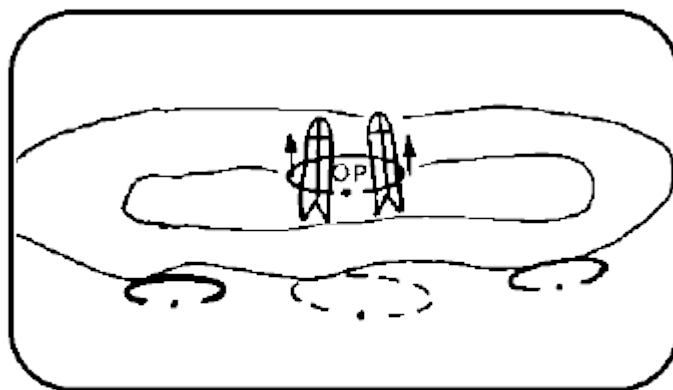


Figure 3-7. Observation Post.

You position machineguns and automatic rifles where they can shoot the most effective surprise fire on the enemy as he crosses the crest. You must also plan machinegun FPLs as in a defense of a forward slope.

The conduct of the defense from a reverse slope is generally the same as from a forward slope. However, the OPs forward of the position not only give warning of the enemy's advance but delay, deceive, and disorganize him by fire. They withdraw before they are closely engaged with the enemy. Machineguns with the OPs withdraw first so they can occupy their primary fighting positions before the enemy reaches the crest. As the OPs withdraw, indirect fire hits on the forward slope and on the crest of the hill to slow the advance of the enemy. Troops in primary positions hold their fire until the enemy crosses the crest. As the enemy moves over the crest of the hill, he is hit by all available fire.

- Perimeter Defense. Preparing a perimeter defense is the same as discussed in Part C, lesson one, with these exceptions:
 - The trace of the front is circular rather than linear.
 - Unoccupied areas between squads are generally smaller.
 - The flanks of the squads are bent back conform to the plan.
- Defense of A Roadblock. A roadblock stops or slows enemy movement beyond a point on a road. It usually incorporates an obstacle that is covered by fire.

Roadblocks may be employed to the front, flank, and rear of friendly units. They are employed most in delay and withdrawal operations and against enemy exploitation. The defensive position should allow fields of fire which cover the approaches to the obstacle to keep it from being breached. The friendly defensive position should be inaccessible to the attacker ([Figure 3-7](#)).

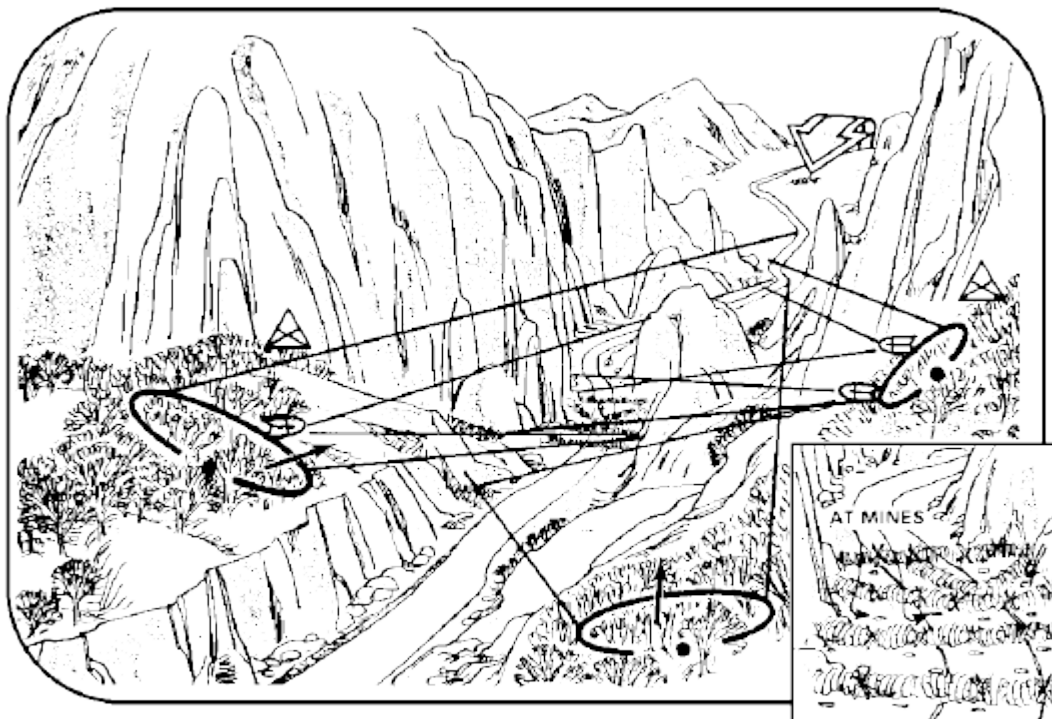


Figure 3-7. Roadblock.

- Characteristics of a Roadblock:
 - Blocks an avenue of approach. It should be difficult to bypass.
 - Takes advantage of natural obstacles. A roadblock is best positioned where movement to its flanks or around it is restricted by natural obstacles, for example, cliffs, swamps, rivers, towns. Manmade obstacles can be built to tie in with and reinforce natural obstacles.
 - Gains surprise. To gain surprise, an obstacle can be placed near a sharp bend in the road, just over the crest of a hill, or where a road passes through a heavily wooded area. Troops and manmade obstacles must remain concealed until it is too late for the advancing enemy to react well. Mines, demolitions, and cratering charges are effective, easily concealed obstacles. They can be quickly armed or disarmed as the situation changes.

- Secure routes to the rear. Secure routes ease resupply and withdrawal ([Figure 3-8](#)). You must insure that withdrawal routes remain secure in order to permit resupply and rapid withdrawal.

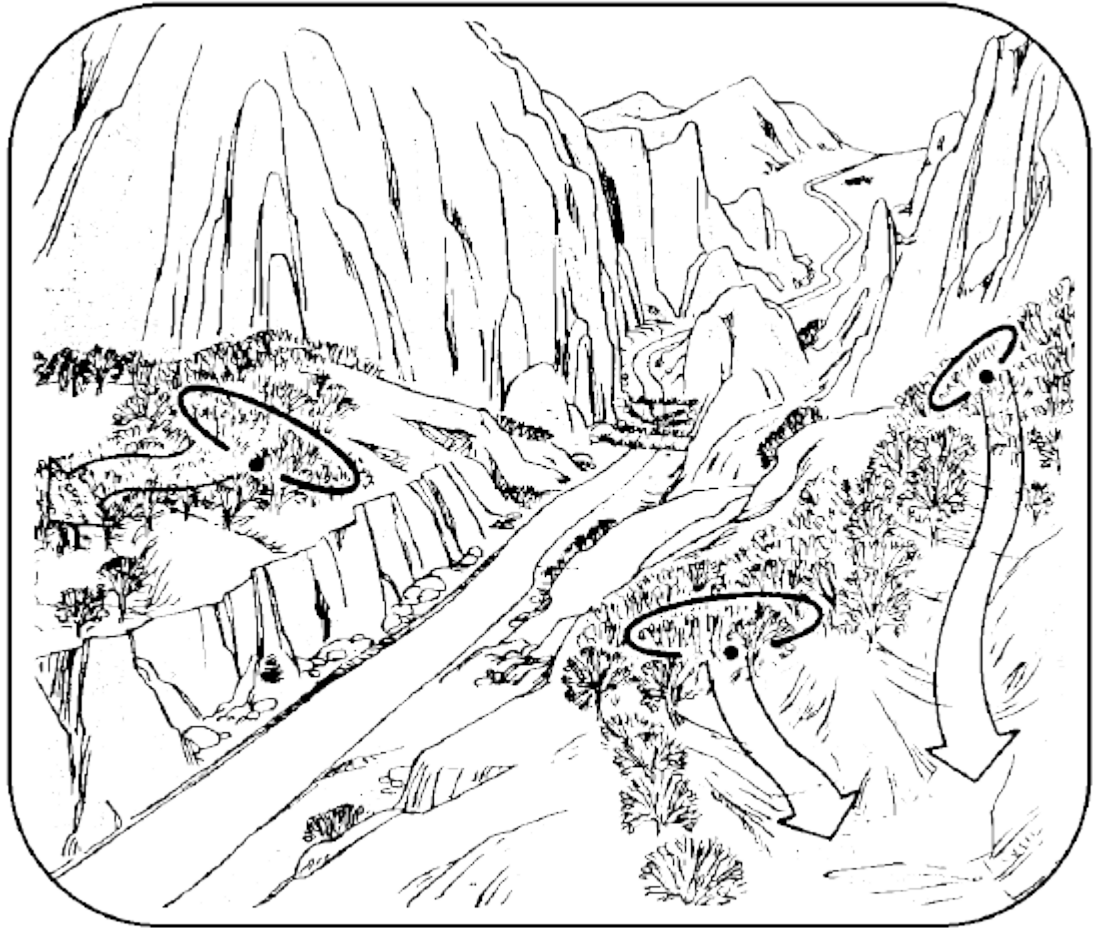


Figure 3-8. Secure Routes.

- Planning the Roadblock. On receipt of the mission, you follow the troop leading procedure. You plan for:
 - the positioning of squads and weapons where they can cover the obstacle and surrounding area in order to prevent the enemy from breaching or going around the obstacle;
 - the positioning of manmade obstacles to reinforce the natural obstacles;
 - fire to support the defense (this includes planning for smoke to conceal the withdrawal);
 - the disengagement and withdrawal of the platoon (successive reward positions are planned to allow reward fire and maneuver or bounding overwatch); and
 - all other aspects of a regular defense.

- Conduct of the Defense of a Roadblock. As the enemy nears the roadblock, OPs warn the leader. On order, the OPs withdraw on planned routes to the defensive positions.

To achieve surprise, the defending force does not prematurely disclose its position. It waits for the enemy to reach the obstacle before it shoots. At that time, it shoots direct and indirect fire on the enemy and the approaches to the obstacle.

As the enemy deploys, the rate of direct and indirect fire is increased to break up his formations ([Figure 3-9](#)).



Figure 3-9. Increase Fire.

8. Withdrawal.

In a withdrawal, a company disengages from the enemy and repositions for some other mission. That mission may be to delay the enemy, to defend another position, or to attack some place else.

There are two types of withdrawals: not under pressure and under pressure.

In a withdrawal not under pressure, a company disengages and moves to its rear while the enemy is not attacking ([Figure 3-10](#)). Platoons must be ready to fight their way to the rear or to resume the defense should the enemy attack.

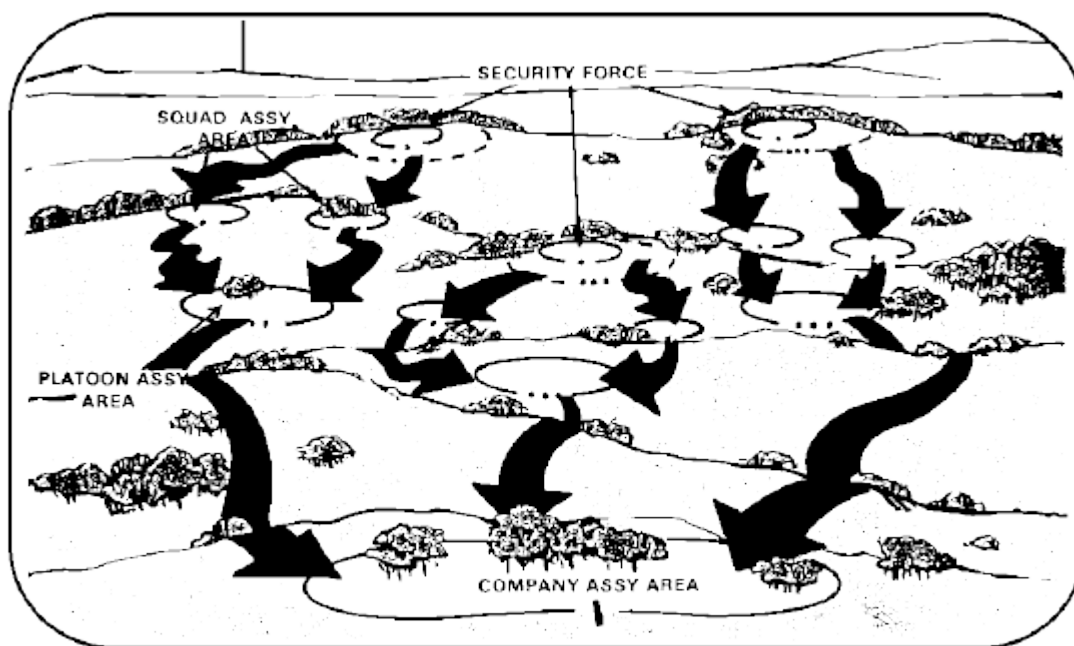


Figure 3-10. Withdrawal Not Under Pressure.

In a withdrawal under pressure, a company disengages and moves to its rear while the enemy is attacking. Platoons disengage by fighting their way to the rear.

9. Withdrawal Not Under Pressure.

A withdrawal not under pressure is conducted with speed, secrecy, and deception. It is best done at night or during other periods of reduced visibility (fog, snow, rain, or smoke). Usually, all platoons move to the rear at the same time. The company leaves a security force to cover the withdrawal by deception and by fire and maneuver when required.

10. Security Force.

The size, composition, and mission of the company security force are directed by the company commander. He will also designate the security force commander, normally the company executive officer or a platoon leader.

The company commander may decide to leave one platoon as the company security force or have each platoon leave a platoon security force. The three platoon security forces then make up the company security force.

If your platoon is selected as the company security force, you must reposition squads and weapons to cover the company's withdrawal ([Figure 3-11](#)). This normally includes repositioning a squad in each of the other platoon positions to cover the most dangerous avenue of approach into that position, and repositioning weapons to cover the most dangerous avenues of approach into the company's position.

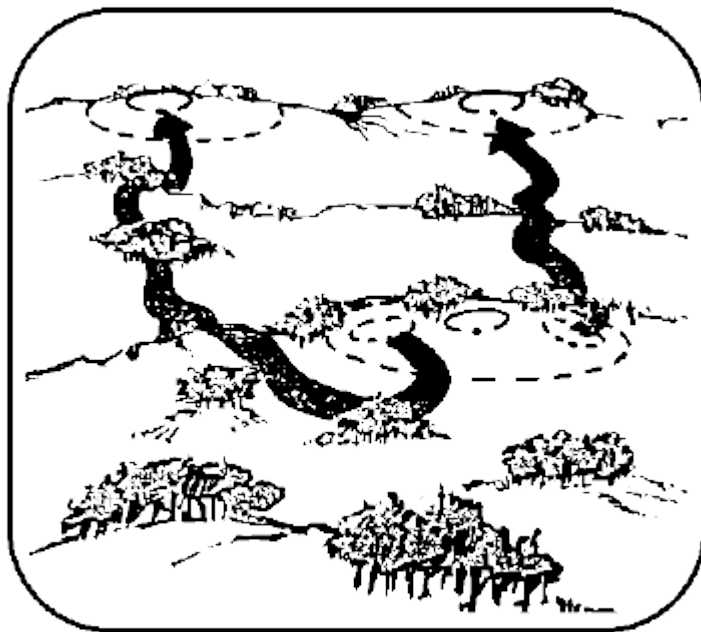


Figure 3-11. Repositioning Squads.

If each platoon is to have a security force, it normally consists of one squad, one machinegun, and two Dragons. The platoon security force leader is normally the squad leader of the squad left in position. When the withdrawal starts, each platoon security force comes under the control of the company security force commander.

The security force strives to conceal the withdrawal and deceive the enemy by continuing the normal operating patterns of the company. If the enemy attacks during the withdrawal, the security force covers the withdrawal by fire. Once the company is at its next position or a designed distance from the old positions, the company security force commander will order withdrawal of the security force. These orders should be given by telephone or codeword over the radio. The security force withdraws using the same basic plan as the company main body did. If under attack, the security force may have to conduct fire and maneuver to the rear until contact is broken and then assemble to move to the rear.

11. Quartering Party.

The company commander may send a quartering party to the next position before the withdrawal starts. This party is normally made up of company headquarters troops, and representatives from each platoon. Platoon representatives are usually the platoon sergeant and a guide for each squad.

When at the next position, the platoon representative reconnoiter and, as appropriate, pick positions, sectors, routes, and OPs for the platoon. When the platoon arrives, the squad guides meet and guide

their squads into position. Your platoon sergeant will meet and brief you on the position and any other important information.

12. Planning.

The company commander normally tells his platoon leaders:

- when the withdrawal will start;
- where the company assembly area is and what each platoon is to do upon arrival in it (when the company is assembled, it moves under its commander's control to the next position);
- where each platoon assembly area is;
- what route to take from the platoon assembly area to the company assembly area;
- the size, composition, and commander of the security force; and
- what the company's and platoons' next missions are.

Based on the information received from the company commander, you and the platoon leader plan for and tell their squad leaders:

- when the withdrawal will start;
- where the platoon assembly area is and what each squad is to do on arrival in it;
- where the squad assembly areas are;
- what routes to take from the squad assembly areas to the platoon assembly area;
- the size, composition, and commander of the security force; and
- what the platoon's and squads' next mission are.

13. Withdrawal Under Pressure.

A withdrawal under pressure is conducted when a company is forced from its defensive positions by the enemy. The company may move to other positions to continue the defense or disengage and move elsewhere for another mission. Each platoon tries to disengage from the enemy by fire and maneuver to the rear. Once a platoon has disengaged and moved to the rear of its original position, the company commander will direct what it is to do next. This may include covering the reward movement of other platoons, occupying a new defensive position, or moving to perform another mission.

14. Sequence of Withdrawal.

The company commander controls the sequence in which platoons withdraw. His decision on which to withdraw first is usually based on where the enemy attacks and how heavily each platoon is engaged. Once the company must withdraw, he normally withdraws the least heavily engaged platoon first. This platoon then disengages and moves into a position where it can overwatch the disengagement of the more heavily engaged platoons. The platoons then change roles and leapfrog to the rear using fire and maneuver ([Figure 3-12](#)).

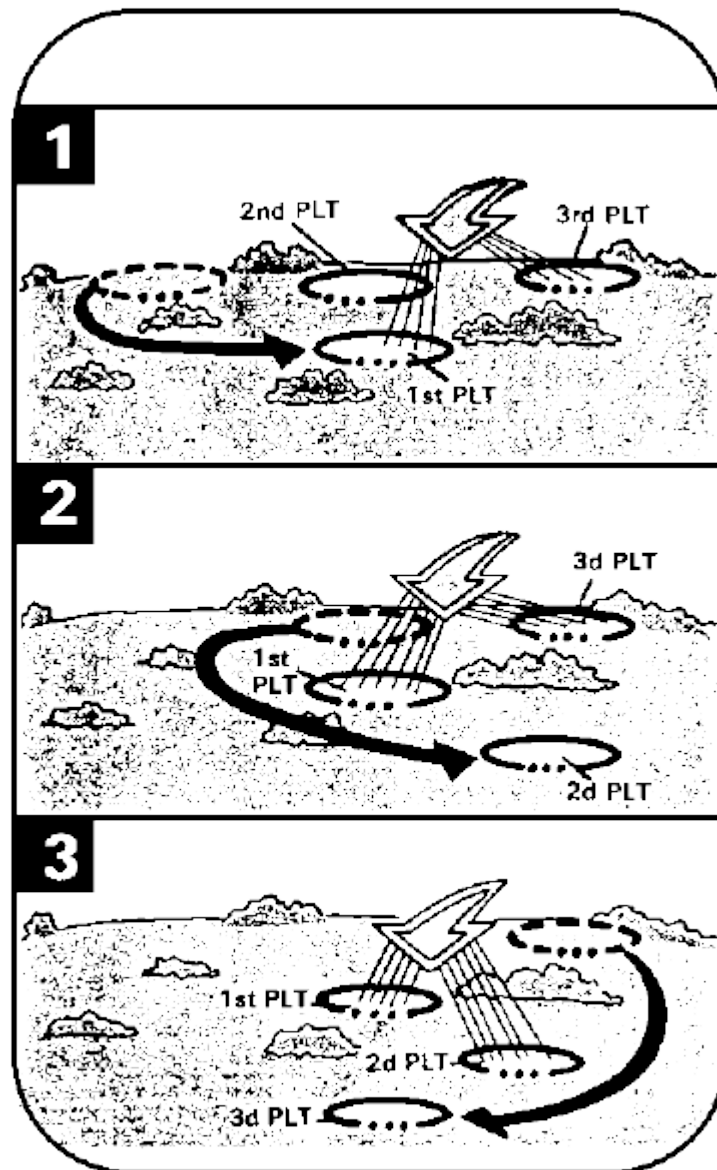


Figure 3-12. Withdrawal Under Pressure.

15. Methods of Disengagement.

Platoons have three basic methods of disengaging from the enemy; by thinning the lines, by fire teams, and by squads. Fire and maneuver and bounding overwatch are keys to each method. The degree of, and level at which, fire and maneuver and bounding overwatch take place depends on how closely the enemy follows and the pressure he applies.

- Disengagement by Thinning the Lines. The first stage of the fire and maneuver rearward is in the squads. Squad and team leaders have men move rearward singly to where each takes a firing position to cover the move of the other as they, in turn, move back ([Figure 3-13](#)).

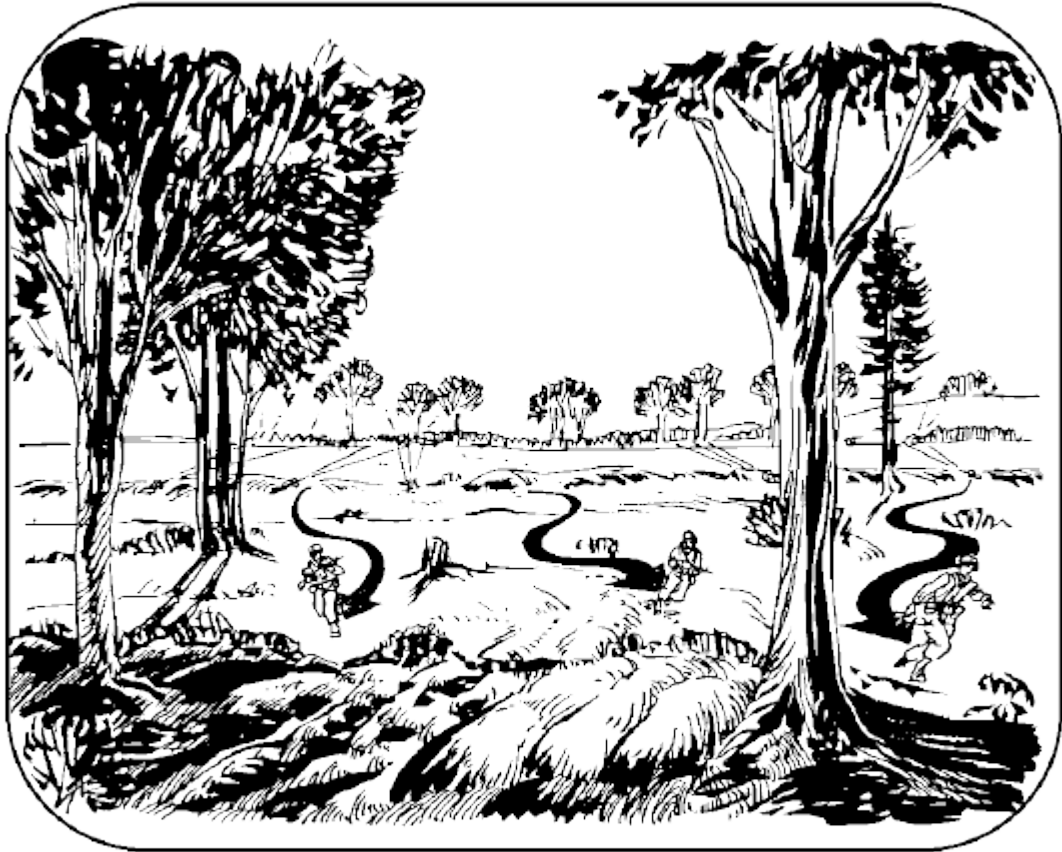


Figure 3-13 By Thinning the Lines.

- Disengagement by Fire Teams. If enemy fire is such that thinning the lines is not necessary, or if, after having moved back far enough, it becomes no longer necessary, squads move back by fire teams. One fires and one moves. They alternate roles with each move ([Figure 3-14](#)).

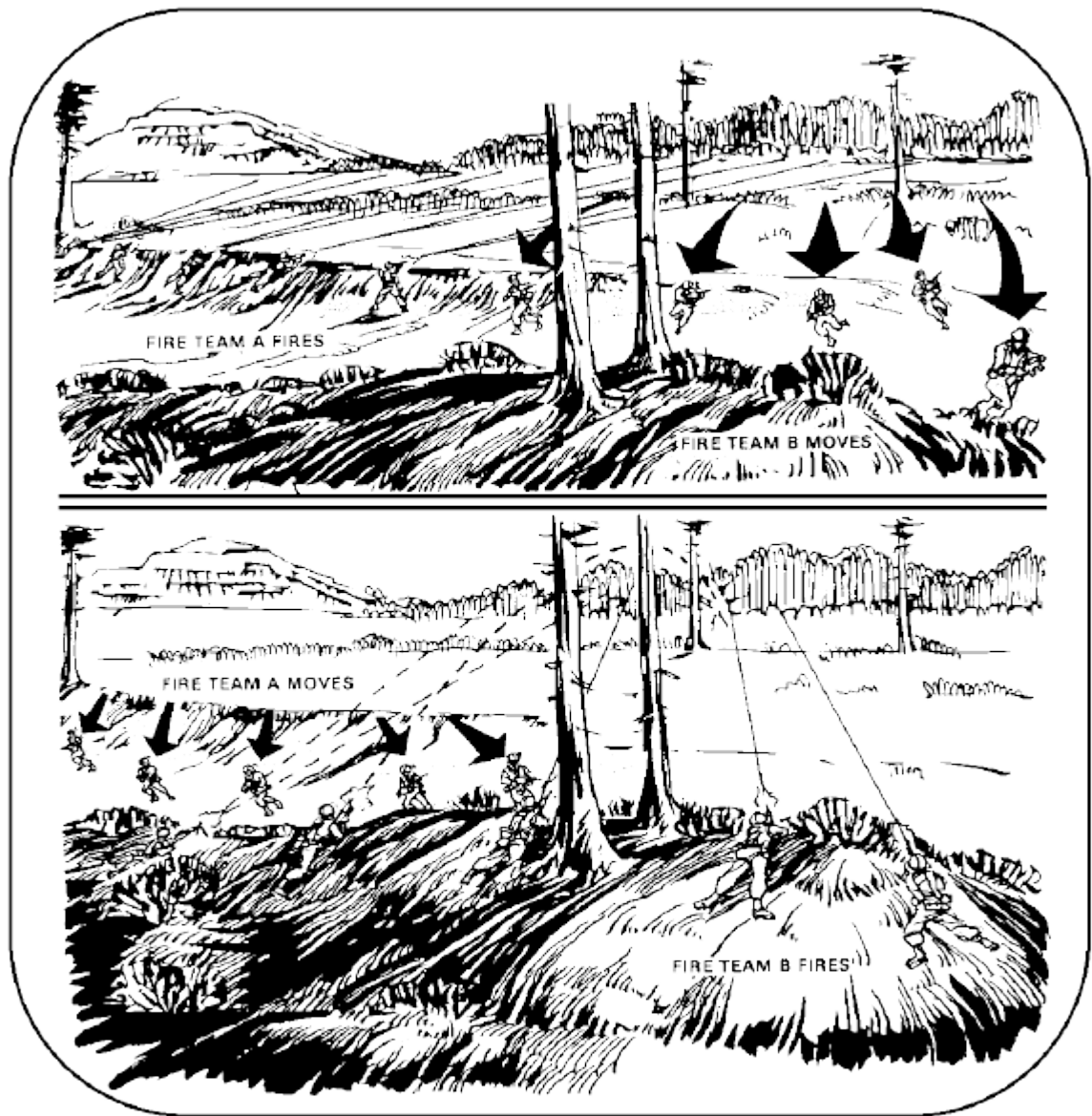


Figure 3-14. By Fire Teams.

- Disengagement by Squad. If enemy fire is such that fire and maneuver by fire teams is unnecessary, or if squads have moved back to a point where it is no longer necessary, the platoon moves back by squads. You have each squad, in turn, move back covered by the fire of the others ([Figure 3-15](#)).

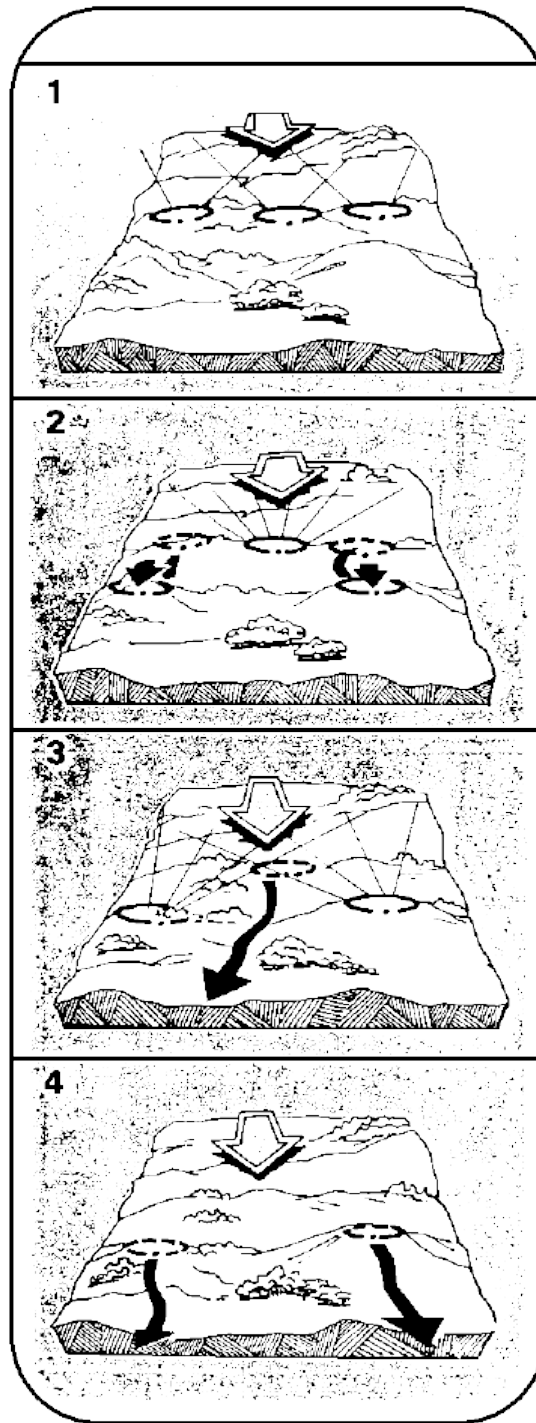


Figure 3-15. By Squads.

Your platoon may use all three of these methods as it moves rearward. As enemy fire on it lessens, the platoon changes to the next faster method of disengagement (first by thinning the lines, then by fire team, and then by squads). It uses only those methods (or that method) which are necessary for its safety while moving.

At some point in this action, your the platoon can stop fire and maneuver. It will then continue its withdrawal by bounding overwatch (to the rear). This occurs when the platoon is no longer under enemy direct fire or when another platoon is covering its move. Once disengagement is complete, the platoon moves as directed by the company commander.

16. Delay.

In a delay, a unit trades space for time. The intent is to slow the enemy, cause enemy casualties, and, if possible, stop him without becoming decisively engaged. This is basically done by defending, disengaging, moving, and defending again. Platoons do not conduct delays independently but fight as part of their company in a delay.

17. Quartering Party.

As explained in the withdrawal not under pressure, the company commander may use a quartering party to reconnoiter the positions to the rear and to help the platoons on arrival at each position. This aids preparation and occupation of positions and eases supply problems.

18. Planning.

The company commander, platoon leaders, and squad leaders reconnoiter positions and routes as much as possible before the delay starts. The company commander normally gives each platoon:

- an initial position to defend;
- subsequent positions to the rear;
- a platoon assembly area behind each position where the platoon moves after disengagement;
- the location of the company assembly area, when used;
- a general route to follow from position to position;
- his plan to conduct the defense, disengagement, and movement; and
- instructions about the quartering party, when used.

19. Disengagement.

The company and platoons disengage from the enemy as described in a withdrawal under pressure. Once disengagement is complete, a platoon either moves to its assembly area and then to the company assembly area, or it moves directly to its next position and defends again. The method used will be specified by the company commander.

20. Control.

The company commander controls the conduct of the delay. You and the other platoon leaders must keep him informed of all enemy activity and the condition of his platoon. If communications are lost with the company commander, you must use your judgment and disengage only when seriously endangered or according to the company plan. If you act independently, you immediately take steps to notify the company commander of the platoon's actions.

This completes lesson three. You should know how to coordinate with adjacent platoons and execute a platoon defense including defending when visibility is poor, as the reserve of a forward rifle company, defending on a reverse slope, and a roadblock. Withdrawal and delay operations were also discussed. After reviewing all the material in this lesson, you should complete the practice exercise for lesson three. Answer and feedback for the questions in the practice exercise will be provided to show you where further study is required.

LESSON 3 PRACTICAL EXERCISE

Instructions The following items will test your understanding of the material covered in this lesson. There is only one correct answer for each item. When you have completed the exercise, check your answers with the answer key that follows. If you answer any item incorrectly, review that part of the lesson which contains the portion involved.

Situation: You are a platoon leader. Your platoon is coordinating with adjacent platoons and executing a platoon defense.

1. You have decided to patrol the area in front of your battle position. You
 - ☐ a. must check with the battalion S-3.
 - ☐ b. should get permission from the battalion S-2.
 - ☐ c. must coordinate size, type, time of departure, and of return, and routes.
 - ☐ d. must coordinate with adjacent platoon-size element, the battalion S-3 and S-2.
2. Your platoon is the reserve of a forward rifle company. You have been given the mission to prepare to counterattack on a likely penetration. When you develop the counterattack plan, you
 - ☐ a. ensure that it has a tentative objective and a direction of attack.
 - ☐ b. must include a LD and an attack position.
 - ☐ c. must select an attack position which ties in with the supplementary position of the forward platoons.
 - ☐ d. develop the plan to block the approaches selected by the company commander.
3. Your platoon is defending on a reverse slope. The machineguns are forward with the OPs. The enemy attacks and you begin to withdraw the OPs before they become closely engaged with the enemy. As the OPs withdraw, you
 - ☐ a. engage the enemy with heavy machinegun fire.
 - ☐ b. direct the troops in primary positions to commence firing in order to slow the enemy's advance.
 - ☐ c. place indirect fire on the forward slope and on the crest of the hill to slow the advance of the enemy.
 - ☐ d. hit the enemy with all available fire.
4. The company OPORD gave your platoon the mission to conduct the defense of a roadblock. You explain to your squad leaders that roadblocks are
 - ☐ a. only used on likely armor avenues of approach.
 - ☐ b. rarely used to gain surprise.
 - ☐ c. normally constructed using manmade obstacles.
 - ☐ d. employed most in delay and withdrawal operations and against enemy exploitation.

5. Your platoon is fighting as part of a company in a delay. You are explaining control of the delay to your squad leaders. You

- ☐ a. state that the battalion commander controls the delay.
- ☐ b. tell them the company commander controls the conduct of the delay.
- ☐ c. state that each platoon leader is responsible for controlling their platoons during the delay.
- ☐ d. state that platoon leaders are expected to use their judgement and disengage when they are seriously threatened by the enemy.